

Iraqi Kurds want to use Turkish lira

ANKARA (AP) — Iraqi Kurds want to substitute Turkish liras for now worthless Iraqi dinars in the area they control in northern Iraq, an official said Saturday. "We want our people to deal and trade in Turkish lira," said Sami Kizil, a Kurdish representative of the mainstream Iraqi Kurdish guerrilla group Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). The group shares power in the government of a de facto Kurdish state in northern Iraq, protected by the West. Turkey was unlikely to comply with the Kurd request, which could lead to the concentration of the bulk of the Kurdish population inside Turkey, said Huriyev, a leading Turkish newspaper. Foreign Ministry officials said they would study the request, which was prompted by the recent annulment by Baghdad of pre-Gulf war 25-dinar bills widely used in the Kurdish area. Mr. Kizil said most of the Iraqi currency in the Kurdish area was now worthless. Turkey has been fighting separatist Kurds inside its borders and opposes an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq.



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Crown Prince reviews public safety measures

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Saturday visited the Public Security Department (PSD) where he met with PSD Director Major-General Abdul Rahman Al Udwan and discussed "security measures taken to guarantee the safety and well-being of the country and its citizens."

Pentagon discounts Iraq role in 'Bush plot'

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. Defence Department officials are discounting allegations that Iraq tried to have former President George Bush assassinated last month in Kuwait, according to a television news report on Friday. NBC News reported that senior officials, whom it did not name, said evidence of an assassination plot was questionable and that heavy-handed interviewing tactics by the Kuwaitis made testimony given by Iraqi prisoners useless. The network gave no other details. Officials in the Clinton administration have said the United States might retaliate against Baghdad if U.S. investigators who went to Kuwait find evidence that those accused of plotting the assassination had links with Iraqi authorities. Baghdad has dissociated itself from the alleged plot, saying Mr. Bush was not worth the explosives. Kuwaiti prosecutors have charged 17 people with trying to blow up the former president on his visit last month.

U.S. team holds talks in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Top Pakistani and U.S. officials met here Saturday to discuss issues straining their relations, including Islamabad's alleged involvement in international terrorism and its nuclear ambitions. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State John Malott led the U.S. side in the first talks with Pakistan since Bill Clinton became president in January. Pakistan's team was led by Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Mohammad Khan and Akram Zaki, secretary general at the Foreign Ministry. U.S. sources said Mr. Malott's mission was to discuss the "whole range" of issues plaguing relations between the two countries, who were close allies through much of the cold war but have drifted apart since.

Floods kill four in northern Syria

ALEPPO (AP) — Floods in northern Syria have killed four children and destroyed 200 homes, the state-run Tishrin newspaper said Saturday. It said the floods were caused by five hours of torrential rain that fell around several villages in Aleppo province, 320 kilometres north of Damascus on Wednesday. The four children were between two months and eight years old, said the paper. It said about 200 houses were demolished and a number of people left homeless.

Cairo holds Nigerian on drug charges

CAIRO (AP) — A Nigerian woman transiting Cairo international airport was arrested Saturday for trying to smuggle half a kilogramme of heroin in her body. An airport security officer said authorities became suspicious of Latifat Salami, 29, because she was nervous and agitated while waiting for a connecting flight from Lagos to the Saudi port of Jeddah. On searching her, authorities found large amounts of Gabonese currency. They also discovered she had swallowed capsules holding 500 grammes of heroin. The woman was arrested, doctors administered a purgative and the capsules were retrieved, the security officer said.

Sniper kills Moroccan soldier in Somalia

MOGADISHU (R) — A Moroccan soldier has been killed by a sniper fire in central Somalia, a spokesman for the U.N. peacekeeping force there said Saturday. Corporal Mustafa Emery was the first peacekeeper to be killed in Somalia since command of the operation passed from the United States to the United Nations on May 13. Cpl. Emery was part of a 1,295-

Palestinians accuse U.S. of applying undue pressure

TUNIS (Agencies) — Yasser Arafat Saturday accused the United States of putting undue pressure on Palestinian negotiators to accept an American document offered as a compromise to end a deadlock in Middle East peace talks. Mr. Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), said the U.S. administration exercised "immense pressure" on Palestinian delegates to try to get them to accept an agreement on self-rule for Palestinians in the occupied territories. He said the PLO and Palestinian negotiators rejected the American plan because it was a copy of an Israeli document presented to the Palestinians earlier in the talks. The document has not been made public. The ninth round of talks concluded at the State Department in Washington Thursday with no breakthroughs. Mr. Arafat said some Arab states joined the United States in pressuring the PLO on the self-rule proposal, but he did not say which countries. Egypt is known to have been one of the countries. "It is not only the Americans who were putting immense pressure on us during the ninth round of the talks but also some of the Arabs," he said.

"But we will never submit to the conspiracy," Mr. Arafat added. Palestinian peace negotiators arrived here Saturday to brief the PLO leadership on the ninth round of negotiations with Israel. Sami Kilani, Zakaria A. Agha and the spokeswoman of the peace team, Hanan Ashrawi, were to take part in the PLO meeting later Saturday, Palestinian sources said. Chief delegate Faisal Husseini was to join them Sunday, the sources said. The PLO Friday rejected the U.S. proposal to bridge the gap between Israel and the Palestinians saying it represented "the Israeli government view on all points." The American proposal marked the first time the United States, which co-sponsors the peace talks with Russia, had intervened since the Middle East peace process was launched in Madrid in 1991. Washington submitted it first to the Israelis and then to the Palestinians and billed it as the final attempt to bridge the gap between the two sides. Last Monday the PLO protested the lack of progress at the peace talks by cutting the number of the Palestinian delegation from 12 to three. Mr. Kilani, Mr. Agha and Saeb Erakat were the three who continued negotiations with the Israeli delegates. The PLO began reviewing the results of the ninth round of peace talks late Friday in the presence of Mr. Arafat. "The situation is extremely critical and very difficult and you cannot take the Palestinian side for granted," she added. "You cannot assume we will be there regardless of what is happening." Asked if the Palestinians had any alternative to the 18-month-old negotiations, Dr. Ashrawi replied: "The question is, is this peace process creating changes that are constructive?" "If we are seeing it as an excuse and a rationalisation and a cover for more of the same and the perpetuation of the occupation and Israeli actions, then it becomes irrelevant because you end up with nothing to negotiate about." In London, a senior PLO official said Friday that Palestinians would negotiate with U.S. officials in the days ahead to try to agree a draft statement on self-rule for the next session of peace talks. But Nabil Shaath chided the United States for what he called the unfair presentation this week of the U.S. draft statement to the



RESCUED: French RAID tactical police carry a child from the suburban nursery school Commandant Charcot Saturday after a hooded hostage-taker was shot and killed by a sharpshooter. The killing ended a 46-hour siege during which the hostage-taker, holding 30 children at first, demanded a ransom of 100 million French francs (See story on page 8)

Palestinians expect moves towards unity after 'failure' of ninth round of peace talks

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — After nine rounds of "fruitless" negotiations with the Israelis, Palestinian leaders are preparing the grounds for an in-depth evaluation of the entire peace process and seeking efforts to rebuild Palestinian unity before the PLO meets early next month, Palestinian sources said Saturday. Repeated calls by some Palestinian leaders to begin a "comprehensive national dialogue" to restore national unity before restarting peace talks "based on Palestinian and international legitimacy" may bear fruit this time, the sources predicted. At a press conference Saturday, one of these leaders urging the closing of Palestinian ranks, Nayef Hawatmeh of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), renewed his call on Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and all factions inside

and outside the organisation to work together towards improving inter-Palestinian relations and also the (Madrid) conditions for participation in the peace talks. PLO insiders told the Jordan Times that some opposition groups, including Mr. Hawatmeh's Damascus-based front, have "realised that opposition from a distance does not have any effect on the ground and that a new approach has to be taken." This approach, the sources said, is to begin with agreeing on a relationship between the PLO leadership and the opposition — to include all political forces, as well as independents — that would eventually "serve the cause and the people." "There is an urgent need to strengthen the internal situation before we move ahead," said one Palestinian official on condition of anonymity. "This needs leaders with objective and open minds to see how to deal with our situation, and where and how we go from here." The official said that intensive Palestinian meetings are taking place to prepare an "in-depth assessment of the peace process in order to find ways of dealing with the talks before the PCC meeting in Tunis takes place." The 80-member PCC, which coordinates between the Palestine National Council (PNC) and the PLO Executive Committee, is expected to meet early next month after the Muslim feast of 'Eid Al Adha. Palestinian rifts deepened after the PLO agreed to participate in the ninth round in Washington on April 27 before achieving minimal demands, including the repatriation of expellees stranded in Lebanon's Marj Al Zhour area and an Israeli declaration not to resort to further expulsions in the future. Although critics of Mr. Arafat accuse him of taking "unilateral decisions," Palestinian analysts said the chairman's disappointment over the ninth round will "force him to

Lull in Kabul battles

KABUL, Afghanistan (Agencies) — After three days of heavy shelling that killed at least 100 people, war-weary Kabul residents used a lull in the fighting Saturday to bury their dead. Authorities said Kabul airport reopened after closing Friday due to the fighting. Kabul Radio said dozens were killed in this week's battles, and hospitals were overflowing with the wounded. Sporadic fighting continued Saturday in the southern suburbs, where Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masoud's fighters launched an offensive Wednesday to flush out rival militias. Intermittent rockets were fired from the south into central Kabul. But in this capital that has been divided and destroyed in more than a year of fighting among factions, a few rockets a day pass for peace. Government sources said the rivals struck a ceasefire starting late Friday after a day of the heaviest shelling in three months. Since they overthrew the communist government last April, the guerrillas have been fighting among themselves for a greater share of power. Their war has killed tens of thousands of people and made hundreds of thousands homeless. Kabul Radio said guerrilla leaders, who have been talking peace in the eastern city of Jalalabad for more than two weeks, were ready to end their negotiations by Sunday. But hopes for peace were dim. "Yes, there are no rockets now, but all that could change by the afternoon," said Mohammad Yunus, a vegetable vendor in downtown Kabul. Shuttered shops reopened Saturday, but some merchants returned to find their stores looted, rocketed, or both. In a park near the downtown area boys in traditional loose baggy pants and long shirts played a game of "ghurza," a cross between tag and hopscotch. At Kabul's largest Khair-khaneh cemetery, busloads of people came to bury their dead. Ali Mohammad Ali, father of one 14-year-old girl brought for burial, said he had lost three children in five years.

Saudi Arabia detains human rights activist

RIYADH (Agencies) — Authorities Saturday detained the spokesman for a human-rights group whose creation angered the Saudi leadership, relatives and other sources said. The detention of Mohammad Al Masari was the latest step in a swift government clampdown on the group, indicating the ruling royal dynasty and religious establishment saw it as a challenge to their authority. Also, authorities confiscated the U.S. passport of Mr. Masari's American wife for undisclosed reasons, but she remained free, relatives said. She has contacted the U.S. embassy in an effort to get it back, they said. It was not clear for what offence Mr. Masari was being detained. He is the son of the group's founder, Abdullah Ben Sulaiman Al Masari. The younger Al Masari, 47, married his wife about a year ago during a visit to the United States, relatives said. He was active in distributing declarations by his father, a lawyer and retired judge, and the five other members of the group who announced its foundation May 5. Contacted for comment by the Associated Press, U.S. embassy spokesman Rick Roberts said only that any dealings Mr. Masari's wife had with the embassy would be covered by U.S. privacy laws and he could not comment on them. The State Department, asked for comment on the crackdown, responded with a brief statement. It said that "our embassy will look into the reports of the dismissal from employment of members" of the committee and that U.S. embassy officers had met with representatives of the group. "We consider our meeting with members of the committee to be a routine, legitimate activity entirely consistent with the activities of our embassies throughout the world," the statement said. It said the meeting has been discussed between our two governments and it does not affect our excellent relations" with Saudi Arabia. The United States is investigating reports of the Saudi crackdown. Even while announcing the inquiry through the U.S. embassy,

U.S. draft says self-rule and final status interlocked in agreed 5-year time frame

The U.S., saying it was attempting to bridge the gap between Israel and Palestinians in peace talks, presented a draft "joint statement." The draft was rejected by the Palestinian delegation. Following is the text of the draft. Please note that dots appear in places where the original available to the Jordan Times was illegible.

Israeli-Palestinian joint statement

Israel and the Palestinians agree that it is time to put an end to the conflict between them. Reaffirming their commitment to the peace process launched at Madrid, they seek to negotiate their differences and create a peaceful future in which Israelis and Palestinians will live side by side, in peace, for generations to come. The goal of the current Arab-Israeli peace process is real and comprehensive peace, based on United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Toward this goal, in line with the invitation to the Madrid peace conference, the two sides want to reach agreement, as soon as possible on interim self-government arrangements for the Palestinians in the territories. The negotiating process is being conducted in phases; the

options within the framework of the agreed basis of negotiations should remain open. During the interim period, a major change will occur in the existing situation in the territories. Functions of the Israeli Civil Administration will be transferred to the Palestinians, and the Civil Administration will be dissolved. The two sides agree that an important outcome of this first phase is the (...) through the negotiation of interim self-government which should give Palestinians greater control over the decisions that affect their lives and fate. It should also put an end to the confrontation between Israel and the Palestinians, and create a new relationship between them. It is Israel's view that the security needs of both sides should be taken into consideration while overall security responsibility (as well as the responsibilities for Israelis in the territories) will remain under Israel during the interim period. It is the Palestinian view that the legitimate security needs of both will be taken into consideration with the ultimate objective of achieving regional stability and peace. The Palestinian interim authority will establish a strong police force to provide security and maintain public order (alternative language following). The two sides have different views on security, which they will continue to discuss. Over the past three weeks, Israel and the Palestinians have taken an important step toward these objectives. They have created working groups on key issues, including land and water, the concept of in-

(Continued on page 10)

Israelis wound 55 in Gaza

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (AFP) — At least 55 Palestinians were shot and wounded Saturday in the occupied Gaza Strip when soldiers broke up violent protests over Israel's creation 45 years ago, hospital sources said. The protests, and a general strike which gripped the West Bank and Gaza Strip, were ordered by 10 Palestinian groups opposed to the Middle East peace talks. The fundamentalist Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, and four Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) groups, in a statement issued Thursday in Damascus, urged the Palestinians to confront the "dangerous plot" threatening them. Most of the wounded were shot in the legs when soldiers opened fire to disperse demonstrations in the Gaza refugee camps of Shati and Jabalya as well as in Gaza City, Palestinian hospital sources said. The worst fighting took place in Jabalya immediately after the army lifted a three-day curfew. At least 45 Palestinians were shot and wounded in the camp. The army imposed a curfew on Jabalya after announcing this week the killing of six Palestinians who had tried to flee to Egypt. Soldiers also opened fire on a group of Palestinians who had gathered outside the home of one of the dead men in the village of Jabalya, near the camp, Palestinian sources said. Masked men meanwhile shot dead Maiseh Fayed, 25, who was suspected of collaborating with the Israeli authorities.

مكتبة جامعة الازهر

Peres is worried U.S. could lose interest

TEL AVIV (AP) — Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has warned that the United States could lose interest in the Middle East peace process if the conflict is not resolved quickly. Peres said that the United States is "incurable disease" unless negotiations are quickened.

Peres spoke on Israeli television Friday as Israeli negotiators returned from Washington reporting little achievement from the ninth round of Arab-Israeli negotiations launched in 1991.

Israeli talks with the Palestinians are stuck over Israel's proposal for limited self rule for the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Negotiations with Syria are bogged down over demands for Israel to withdraw from the Golan Heights. Israel has signalled a readiness for only a partial pull back.

"I think we must create a feeling that time is short and that we must try to expedite the peace process as much as possible," said Mr. Peres.

He warned that extremists could easily upset talks by staging attacks, saying the longer negotiations lasted, "the more elements get into the picture we have no control over. I see fundamentalism spreading throughout the Middle East."

"There is also a danger that more positive elements, including the United States, will lose interest and declare this an incurable disease. It would be the worst thing that could happen. I say this is a curable disease,"

he said.

American Secretary of State Warren Christopher had hinted Friday in Washington of growing weariness with attempts to expedite Middle East talks. "We will play our role but they must also play theirs," Mr. Christopher said.

Mr. Peres accused Syria of "intentionally conducting negotiations very slowly."

Syria "in essence is conducting the peace process as a war process, a war of nerves, test of strength," Mr. Peres asserted.

He tempered the criticism by praising Syria's overall shift in attitude towards Israel. "I am glad it has switched from a war strategy to a peace strategy," Mr. Peres said.

Mr. Peres urged Palestinian negotiators to adopt Israel's approach to a settlement of avoiding immediate discussion of borders. "They want a timetable and an instant map. It won't fly," he said.

He argued that a transition phase was needed to "bridge a gap created by the current climate of fear and mistrust," or the continuing violence of a five year Palestinian uprising.

Other Israeli officials were more optimistic about the pace of talks.

"Everything requires cooking time," said Uri Lubrani, the chief negotiator with Lebanon. Alluding to pressures on Israel to give up Arab land, Mr. Lubrani added: "He who is hasty can lose."

Peres to visit India and China

NEW DELHI (R) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres visits India and China this week to cement recently upgraded ties with two countries hitherto known for their staunch pro-Arab leanings.

China and Israel established diplomatic relations on Jan. 24 last year. India followed within a week, after Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat told reporters in New Delhi that his Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) would not object.

Israeli Ambassador Ephraim Doweik told reporters that Mr. Peres, on a two-day visit to New Delhi starting Monday, would meet Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao carrying an invitation to visit Israel this year.

Mr. Peres is also due to sign memorandums of understanding on economic cooperation, including bilateral investments, and for mutual consultations in foreign relations.

He will also sign agreements on civil aviation, tourism, technological cooperation and cultural exchanges. An agreement on Israel's assistance in drip irrigation and agriculture will be signed later, Mr. Doweik said.

Mr. Peres, due to leave for a three-day visit to China Wednesday, told India's state-run Doordarshan Television: "Like India, China is a great country, a great civilisation."

"As in the case of India, so with China — you cannot escape their greatness, just as we cannot escape our smallness."

Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, breaking the ice for Beijing, visited Israel last September to lay the groundwork for bilateral trade and economic agreements, scientific cooperation and air links.

Establishing ties with China was a diplomatic breakthrough for Israel, giving it full diplomatic relations with all five permanent U.N. Security Council members.

Western diplomats said India had more in common with Israel than with Arabs.

"Whenever the United States announced an arms sale to Saudi Arabia you could see the Israeli and Indian ambassadors heading to the State Department to protest. They might as well have shared a taxi and saved on fuel," a Western diplomat said.

Saudi Arabia has close links with Pakistan, with which India has fought three wars since independence in 1947.

Mr. Peres initially planned to visit India in January.

Hindu-majority India recognised Israel at the Jewish state's birth in 1948, but refused to establish diplomatic ties because of Delhi's support for an independent homeland for the Palestinians, a policy influenced by its 100 million Muslims.

The Indian government allowed a consular office in Bombay in 1950 to help facilitate the emigration of Indian Jews to Israel.

According to Ambassador Sayed, the book's most important lesson "is the centrality of an active American role" in Middle East negotiations.

He noted that the Camp David accords would have been impossible without heavy U.S. involvement, and suggested that Washington's initial reluctance to become part of the Madrid talks had hampered their progress.

"Only when this present administration decided to play again the role of full partner, did the winds of optimism begin to blow," the ambassador said. "We have been clamouring for an American role," Mr. Sayed said, "not just in procedure but in substance."

Mr. Ross described the role of "full partner" as multi-faceted. "We're there as a catalyst, we're there as a facilitator, we're there as an energizer... We are actively there, pushing the parties, reassuring the parties," he said.



Al Safir chief editor Faisal Salman (second from right) with Lebanon Press Union President Mohammad Baalbeki, president of Journalist Union Mulhem Karamy (second from left) and lawyer Boutros Harab (AFP photo)

Egypt hopes to revive Gulf pact

ABU DHABI (R) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa has said a largely dormant security agreement signed two years ago by Egypt, Syria and six Gulf Arab states could be revived in the next few weeks.

"There is going to be a positive development concerning the Damascus declaration," Mr. Musa told Reuters.

Egypt and Syria, which have the Arab World's largest armies, are linked with the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) though the declaration signed in Damascus in March 1991.

But the parties to the agreement have yet to implement the accord due to objections to the alliance by Iran and the almost total destruction of Iraq's military might.

Finance ministers from the eight Gulf Arab allies are due to meet in Doha on May 18. The session will be followed by a meeting of their foreign ministers in Abu Dhabi on June 12.

"The two meetings will be extremely important for the future of the Damascus declaration," said Mr. Musa who is touring GCC states with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The talks, he said, "could lead to reviving it."

Chaos in Egyptian court

HAEKSTAP (AP) — A military judge banished 10 suspected Muslim militants from court Sunday and ordered their trial closed to the public during a chaotic session with the defendants shouting abuse at him.

Defence lawyers told reporters they planned to ask Judge Ahmad Abdullah to step down from the case because of an apparent conflict of interest. He already sentenced one of the defendants to death in another trial on terrorism charges.

Saturday's was the second session of the trial of 14 Muslim extremists charged with five attacks on tourists, police and a cabinet minister with the aim of trying to overthrow the government.

Four defendants are at large. Military prosecutors are demanding that all 14 men hang.

"Ahmad Abdullah is a butcher," the defendants chanted. "We don't want him as our judge." Most sported the beards favoured by Muslim fundamentalists, and all wore cream-coloured prison pajamas and carried Korans.

They called Judge Abdullah, an army major general, the "murderer of Alexandria" because of his judgments in two trials last year at that Mediterranean port city that sentenced eight extremists to death. Among the eight is Ashraf Ibrahim Saleh, a defendant in the current case.

The defendants chanted and intoned speeches for almost 15 minutes after Judge Abdullah opened the session Saturday.

"Because of the chaos by the defendants, the court has decided to empty the courtroom of the defendants," he said.

Lebanon takes Al Safir to court

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon decided Saturday to take an opposition newspaper, closed by the government for a week, to court for publishing an alleged Israeli peace proposal.

An investigating judge referred Faisal Salman, the responsible editor of the leftist Al Safir daily, and journalist Ibrahim Al Amin to a special tribunal that looks into violations of the country's press law.

The judge said Al Safir's publication Tuesday of what it said was a draft proposal for ending Israel's occupation of South Lebanon violated the law by making public a secret document and endangering Lebanon's foreign ties.



Rafik Al Hariri

The trial would start Monday and if convicted the two journalists face a jail term of up to three years.

Al Safir said the document was submitted to Lebanese negotiators at Middle East talks in Washington last week.

The government described the newspaper's text as inaccurate and damaging to national security. A state prosecutor ordered Al Safir closed for a week from Wednesday.

Al Safir's lawyer said the state had no case because the document was not classified top secret and the government had said it was not accurate. He said it could not endanger Lebanon's foreign ties because Beirut has no ties with Israel which is still regarded as an enemy.

Israel and the United States, which is mediating in the delicate Middle East peace process, told Lebanon they objected to the principle of the text's publication.

Al Safir appeared as Beirut Al Massa, a title whose rights are owned by communist leader Mohsen Ibrahim, for a third day on Saturday. It is the third newspaper or television ordered to close since April 29.

The suspensions caused a stir in media and political circles, igniting fears of a possible clampdown on the press which enjoys more freedom in Lebanon than in most other Arab states.

The press and journalists' syndicates said Saturday the judge's decision was unacceptable and called on the country's journalists to back Al Safir.

Talal Salman, Al Safir's owner and editor-in-chief, said he was confident the court would find him innocent of all charges.

The government has suspended until May 20 the opposition daily Nida'a Al Watan and the television station International Communications Network indefinitely, for publishing and broadcasting material deemed damaging to reconciliation in Lebanon where 15 years of civil war ended in 1990.

All three media outlets were sceptical of the policies of Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri.

Prospects for peace promising — experts

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The conditions surrounding the Middle East peace process remain overwhelmingly positive and the chances for progress are good, said a panel of experts who participated in a May 12 discussion at the Brookings Institution.

"Circumstances in the Middle East have rarely looked more promising," said former National Security Council official William Quandt. If the current talks falter, "it will be a long and difficult time before a peace process can be placed back on track," he said.

"The most important thing that we can see today... is that there is a resolve by all parties to reach an agreement," said the Egyptian ambassador to the United States, Ahmad Maher Al Sayed.

The election of a new Israeli government last summer "has really made a difference," he said. Even though the ideas presented by the government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin "are not yet totally satisfactory... (and) do not completely respond to the... legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people," they are "an indication that we are going in the right direction," said Mr. Sayed.

He and Mr. Quandt were joined on the panel by State Department special adviser Dennis Ross and Michael Shihoh, deputy chief of mission at the Israeli embassy.

According to Mr. Ross, the most important aspect of the negotiations that began in Madrid in 1991 is that they overcame "the basic prohibition" on direct talks between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Over the past 18 months, Israeli negotiators have held separate face-to-face talks with their Syrian, Jordanian, Lebanese and Palestinian counterparts. Mr. Ross acknowledged that merely holding such discussions guarantees nothing, but he stressed: "Not being able to talk is a guarantee that you will not make peace."

Another major achievement of the Madrid process is that it brought Palestinians to the negotiating table, Mr. Ross said. One reason the Camp David accords signed by Israel and Egypt in the

late 1970s "could not fulfill their promise" of a comprehensive Middle East peace is that Palestinians were not there to discuss and determine their own future, he indicated.

Mr. Ross affirmed that the peace process is a high priority for the Clinton administration, which signalled its interest upon assuming power in January. Secretary of State Warren Christopher travelled to the Middle East on his first overseas trip and helped resolve the issue of the nearly 400 Palestinians deported by Israel last December, Mr. Ross noted. The administration has also made clear its commitment to act as a "full partner" to the peace talks.

The commitment to continuity and the commitment to political involvement was very important to the parties themselves, and was demonstrated very quickly by the new administration," Mr. Ross said.

The overall role of U.S. diplomacy in the Middle East was discussed at length by the panelists, particularly in their comments on Mr. Quandt's new book, "Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1967."

According to Ambassador Sayed, the book's most important lesson "is the centrality of an active American role" in Middle East negotiations.

He noted that the Camp David accords would have been impossible without heavy U.S. involvement, and suggested that Washington's initial reluctance to become part of the Madrid talks had hampered their progress.

"Only when this present administration decided to play again the role of full partner, did the winds of optimism begin to blow," the ambassador said. "We have been clamouring for an American role," Mr. Sayed said, "not just in procedure but in substance."

Mr. Ross described the role of "full partner" as multi-faceted. "We're there as a catalyst, we're there as a facilitator, we're there as an energizer... We are actively there, pushing the parties, reassuring the parties," he said.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

German military team arrives in Somalia

MOGADISHU (R) — A 45-member advance team of German military specialists flew into Somalia Saturday to participate in the U.N. peacekeeping operation. The team arrived in the capital Mogadishu after flying just over the central town of Belet Uen where the military force — part of a 30,800-strong UNOSOM II (U.N. Operation in Somalia) — will be initially deployed. "We are happy that finally we are here, and we are happy to do our part for humanitarian aid in Somalia," said team leader Major-General George Bernhardt. "We flew over Belet Uen but it didn't look good because of the rain, there are floods and the place appeared a dump," he added. The advance team, which left Cologne/Bonn airport in a military plane Friday, will be followed next week by 100 more specialist troops. The mission is part of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's plan to expand the role of Germany's military, limited to the defence of Western Europe since World War II.

Morocco nabs hashish bound for Europe

RABAT (R) — Moroccan customs have seized 2.3 tonnes of concentrated hashish hidden under garments in containers bound for the Netherlands and Poland, officials said Saturday. The customs department said in a statement that 550 kilograms destined for the Netherlands and 1.75 tonnes for Poland were found in the containers in Casablanca harbour. The authorities have now seized more than 28 tonnes of hashish since they launched a major anti-drug campaign six months ago. Eleven tonnes were seized on an isolated farm north of Rabat early this month, the biggest single haul so far. Most of the remainder was found hidden in foreign trucks about to board the ferry to Spain. In cooperation with the European Community, Morocco plan to invest \$2.2 billion in a five-year economic development programme aimed at wiping out cannabis growing in the Rif mountain area of north Morocco.

Qatar said to ban satellite dishes

DUBAI (R) — Qatar is to ban television satellite dishes in an effort to boost a government-backed cable network which started transmitting earlier this month, the United Arab Emirates newspaper Al Khaleej said Saturday. The paper reported Qatar's Interior Ministry as saying the ban would take effect in two weeks' time, and that the ministry would take "all necessary measures" to ensure people complied with the ban. It did not give a figure for the number of satellite dishes currently in use and did not say what would happen to the dishes after the ban is enforced. Al Khaleej said Qatar Vision Cable Network, controlled by the state-run Qatar General Communications Corporation, had hoped to attract 60,000 subscribers. But initial response to the launch of Qatar Vision had been weak, with few people prepared to pay the 2,000 riyal (\$550) installation fee and additional monthly payments for the 12 channel service, the paper said. It said cable programmes,

unlike the satellite service, would be monitored by the government.

France starts war games with Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — French landing craft unloaded troops and equipment in Kuwait Saturday as France began war games with the emirate it helped free during the 1991 Gulf war, French military officials said. The French navy's landing craft Orage unloaded at Shuwaikh port, just north of Kuwait City, at the start of nine days of exercises involving 700 French sailors, 200 ground troops and 100 air force personnel. Four Mirage 2000 arrived Friday at a Kuwaiti air base from a base in eastern France, officials said. The Corvette Commandant Bory and the anti-submarine frigate Montcalm have left Djibouti between the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, and were due in Shuwaikh later Saturday, they added. French and Kuwaiti military officials were to attend meetings Saturday on security aboard the Commandant Bory and a transport ship, followed by the others on chemical weapons and lessons drawn from the Gulf war. On Sunday, French and Kuwaiti troops are to mobilise for exercises in the desert.

Protesters attack Iranian magazine

NICOSIA (R) — Protesters in Tehran attacked and damaged the offices of a magazine which published an interview with former liberal Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, the Iranian news agency IRNA said Saturday. It said the protesters chanted slogans against Mr. Bazargan, a leading opposition figure who was Iran's first prime minister after the 1979 Islamic revolution. IRNA said they called for Kian magazine to be closed down. "The interview... reflected Bazargan's views on the evolution of the religious thought in the Islamic world and Iran including... the educated and intellectuals," IRNA said. Mr. Bazargan's party, the Freedom Movement, is boycotting Iran's presidential elections, which take place on June 11.

Bourguiba makes rare TV appearance

TUNIS (R) — Former Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba has made a rare appearance on state television with President Zine Ben Ali Abidine after rumours that he was on the point of death. Mr. Bourguiba, 90, was shown in conversation with his successor Mr. Ben Ali in Monastir, where he has lived since being deposed in 1987 on grounds of senility. Tunisian politicians said the appearance scotched recent rumours that Mr. Bourguiba was either a prisoner or close to death. Mr. Bourguiba lives in a guarded state residence in Monastir, 150 kilometres south of Tunis, with a medical team in attendance. He is allowed visits by close relatives and occasional friends, the last of whom was French journalist Jean Daniel in October 1991. Mr. Bourguiba only leaves the house to visit his mother's tomb a few hundred metres away.

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 Les Clés de Fort Boyard
19:00 News in French
19:15 Le Journal de l'histoire
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Executive Stress
21:10 The Good Guys
22:00 News in English
22:30 French Series

PRAYER TIMES
04:04 Fajr
05:37 (Sunrise) Duha
12:32 Dhur
16:12 Asr
19:30 Maghreb
20:59 Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 32785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Carmelite Church Tel. 623560
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771531
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Eusebius Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624288
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 623624, 649332
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Jordan will be affected by a warm front preceding a Khamsin depression centred north of Egypt. Therefore, it will be hot, dry, dusty and partly cloudy, with a chance for scattered showers of rain. Winds will be south-westerly moderate to fresh. In Aqaba, it will be hot and dusty, while winds will be southerly moderate and seas rough.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 18 / 34
Aqaba 22 / 38
Djersa 19 / 35
Jordan Valley 20 / 36

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 32, Aqaba 36. Humidity readings: Amman 16 per cent, Aqaba 16 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
Dr. Nasser Mohammad 904660
Dr. Mohammad Al Nahawi 693925
Dr. Mohammad Al Sawra 732056
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyan 620115
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 78336
Al Asman pharmacy 637055
Naioukh pharmacy 62672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsi pharmacy 637660
Najih pharmacy 847632

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111

HOSPITALS
AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn. 642014
Alkhaldi Maternity, J. Amn. 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malika, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 661714
Samir Hospital 691131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musasher Hospital 6672719
The Islamic, Abdali 771012
Al-Ahli, Abdali 661646
Indian, Al-Mohajreen 771012
Al-Basir, J. Asrafieh 7711126
Army, Marja 8916115
Queen Alia Hospital 6224050
Amal Hospital 674155

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)3220-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
09:15 Agaba (RJ)
10:30 Beirut (RJ)
10:30 Frankfurt (RJ)
10:30 Vienna (RJ)
10:30 Athens (RJ)
11:00 Rome, Vienna (RJ)
11:00 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:00 Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
12:00 Athens (RJ)
12:00 Riyadh (RJ)
12:00 Jeddah (RJ)
12:15 Damascus (RJ)
12:15 Agaba (RJ)
12:15 New Delhi (RJ)
12:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
12:30 Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
12:30 Jeddah (RJ)
12:30 Bangkok (RJ)
12:30 Sana'a (RJ)
12:30 Riyadh (RJ)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
07:00 Agaba (RJ)
07:15 Beirut (RJ)
07:30 Frankfurt (RJ)
07:30 Athens (RJ)
07:30 Rome, Vienna (RJ)
07:30 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
07:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
07:30 Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
07:30 Athens (RJ)
07:30 Riyadh (RJ)
07:30 Jeddah (RJ)
07:30 Damascus (RJ)
07:30 Agaba (RJ)
07:30 New Delhi (RJ)
07:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
07:30 Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
07:30 Jeddah (RJ)
07:30 Bangkok (RJ)
07:30 Sana'a (RJ)
07:30 Riyadh (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
10:30 Cairo (GF)
12:30 Bahrain (GF)
14:30 Moscow (SU)
16:30 Larnaca (CY)
18:30 Beirut (ME)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
07:00 Larnaca (RJ)
07:15 Beirut (ME)
07:30 Beirut (ME)
07:30 Cairo (ME)
07:30 Doha, Bahrain (GF)
07:30 Moscow (SU)
07:30 Larnaca (CY)

MARKET PRICES
Upper/lower price in fcs per kg.
Apple 700 / 700
Banana 680 / 680
Banana (Mekamari) 620 / 620
Beans 540 / 495
Cabbage 70 / 49
Carrot 130 / 95
Cauliflower 250 / 185
Cucumbers (large) 120 / 185
Cucumbers (small) 240 / 185
Eggplant 300 / 185
Garlic 250 / 205
Grapefruit 240 / 185
Lemon 90 / 55
Marrow (large) 580 / 305
Marrow (small) 90 / 55
Mint 150 / 105
Onion (dry) 230 / 185
Onion (green) 280 / 185
Orange 200 / 185
Pepper (hot) 600 / 250
Pepper (sweet) 450 / 350
Peanut 210 / 185
Tomato 520 / 350
Spinach 290 / 185

Home News

Anani says UNRWA role is stressed in multilateral peace talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan's delegate to the Middle East peace negotiations' multilateral phase on refugees, Jawad Al Anani, said the Kingdom insisted that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) play an effective role in providing basic services to Palestinian refugees.

Dr. Anani said that the Jordanian delegation demanded that UNRWA introduce measures to improve the living conditions of the residents of refugee camps, until a permanent political solution has been reached.

Speaking upon his return from Oslo, Norway, where three days of international talks on the plight of the refugees were held, Dr. Anani said the delegation outlined the heavy economic, social and political strain the Kingdom has borne since the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, which saw the move of thousands of refugees into its territory.

The problem of the 1948 refugees and the displaced Palestinians of 1967 constitute a single integrated problem and should therefore have a comprehensive solution in implementation of U.N. General Assembly Resolution 194 of 1948, Dr. Anani stressed.

That resolution demanded the return of refugees or appropriate compensation be given to them for the loss of their property; as well as U.N. Security Council Resolution 237 of 1967, which ruled that all displaced Palestinians be repatriated, said Dr. Anani.

The Jordanian delegation made it clear that the political and judicial framework remain the dominant force behind the bilateral as well as the multilateral phases of the Middle East peace negotiations, Dr. Anani said.



Jawad Al Anani

He added that the Jordanian delegation reiterated to the Oslo meeting that the multilateral talks on the future of the refugees should by no means contradict with or run contrary to the aims or progress of the bilateral negotiations since one is considered supplementary to the other.

Describing the outcome of the Oslo meetings as positive, Dr. Anani said the talks achieved gains for the Arab side and reaffirmed Israel's responsibility for the problem of the Palestinian refugees.

Earlier reports from Oslo quoted delegates to the meeting as saying that Israeli and Palestinian representatives were satisfied with the final statement which touched on sensitive issues and listed specific initiatives to improve the lives of the refugees.

According to Dr. Anani, the committee on the refugees decided to hold its next meeting in Tunis but no final date has been fixed.

Iraq-Jordan transport firm reviews JD 42,000 loss

Minister calls for double effort

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The general assembly of the Iraq-Jordan Land Transport Company (IJLTC) opened a two-day meeting here Saturday to discuss, among other matters, the company's relative poor performance in 1992 that caused an estimated loss of JD 42,000.

The meeting is co-chaired by Ministers of Transport in Jordan and Iraq, Ali Suheimat and Abdul Sattar Al Ma'ni, who reviewed a general report on the company's performance last year and plans for 1993.

A IJLTC source told the Jordan Times that the joint firm, which started operating in 1981 with 900 trucks, was forced to reduce its fleet over the years because of age as well as the reduced amounts of goods transported between Aqaba and Baghdad in 1992, made the year-end 1992 loss inevitable.

The company's remaining fleet

of 336 trucks will be augmented by another 100 vehicles by the end of May, and it is hoped that the move would help the company earn profits in its 1993 operations, said Awad Tal, the company's deputy board chairman.

He said that since its establishment, the IJLTC, which is owned equally by the Jordanian and Iraqi governments, had earned annual profits, but the scrapping of many of its trucks and the reduced amounts of goods transported between Aqaba and Baghdad in 1992, made the year-end 1992 loss inevitable.

Mr. Suheimat, who opened the two-day meeting in Amman Saturday, stressed the need for the company officials and directors to ensure good performance.

Despite last year's difficulties, the IJLTC ought to have produced better results, reflecting the two countries' aspirations, said Mr. Suheimat in a brief address.

Noting that the joint company

portrayed the close ties between Iraq and Jordan and their determination to achieve economic progress, the minister said the firm's board, which will take over operations this year, is called on to double its efforts.

There will be no leniency on the part of Jordan towards any shortcomings, nor dereliction of duty by Jordanian officials in the company who are expected to shoulder their responsibilities seriously and attain the positive and aspired goals, Mr. Suheimat warned.

Jordanians and Iraqis are experiencing circumstances requiring increased efforts to ensure the success of joint work and joint projects, he added.

The new board, he said, should benefit from past experiences and address the points of weakness.

The two transport ministers were received by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker after the opening meeting.



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Saturday receives Iraqi Minister of Transport and Communications Abdul Al Sattar Al Ma'ni (second from right) who is in Amman to review the operations of the Iraq-Jordan Land Transport Company (Petra photo)

Sharif Zeid expressed Jordan's keenness to transform the Kingdom into a unique "transport centre" in the region, serving the interests of all neighbouring Arab states.

He said that close economic and trade links are conducive to the achievement of economic integration.

The Iraq-Jordan Land Transport Company meeting, which continues Sunday, is expected to appoint Mr. Tal as board chairman for 1993.

Cabinet approves JD 7m to develop 4 hospitals

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Saturday approved a JD 7 million allocation to develop and equip four government hospitals in various parts of the country.

The hospitals are Deir Abee Saeed Hospital in Al Koura district, Al Ruseifa Hospital in Yajouz, Al Basfir Hospital in Amman and the Maternity Hospital of Nuseibah Al Maziniyah College in Irbid.

The Cabinet also approved the appointment of Secretary General of the Ministry of Labour Saleh Al Tarawneh to the Jordanian delegation that will participate in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) conference due to be held in Geneva between June 2 and 22.

Mr. Tarawneh will act as head

of the delegation when Minister of Labour Abdul Rahim Al Kabari returns to Amman from Geneva on June 9.

The council of ministers also approved the minutes of the third meeting of the Jordanian-Omani joint committee which was held in Amman April 18-20. The minutes provide for enhancing trade and industrial exchange between Jordan and Oman, launching joint ventures, exempting exchanged agricultural commodities from customs duty and taxes and boosting bilateral cooperation in information and educational fields.

The minutes also provide for (supplying) Oman with Jordanian expertise in the field of legislation, tourism, nursing, medicine and pharmacy.

Ministry studies landslide problem on road project

AMMAN (Petra) — Public Works and Housing Minister Saad Hayel Surour Saturday opened at the ministry a specialised seminar on landslides in the Amman-Jerash-Irbid highway project. Participants to the two-day seminar will discuss several solutions to the problem of landslides, which has hampered the highway project several times.

Seminar looks at pesticides use

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Agriculture, in cooperation with the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), Saturday opened a three-day workshop on the negative effects of pesticides on humans and the environment.

Delegates representing the ministry's departments, other government agencies and a GTZ team are discussing the adverse effects of concentration of pesticides in crops, the harmful effects on farmers who use pesticides and the safe levels of pesticides

for use in agricultural production. The workshop, which opened at the Amman Marriott Hotel, also aims at appraising progress in a German-Jordanian project on controlling pesticide use, according to Youssef Shureiqi, head of the ministry's Pesticides Analysis Department.

Dr. Shureiqi said the ministry of agriculture has set up a special department to control pesticides use in the fields and to determine their negative effects on the environment, public health and the crops themselves.

He said, in 1984 the department set up a special centre for analysis of pesticides and their residues in the crops.

GTZ helped to establish the centre and provided expertise and equipment to assist Jordan in controlling pesticide use to assure the safe production of crops, said Dr. Shureiqi.

In 1988 the centre established a laboratory to determine the quality of pesticides used by Jordanian farmers and help them use only those that conform to international standards.

Road accidents take 9 lives

AMMAN (Petra) — Nine people were killed about 187 injured in 421 car accidents during the first week of May, according to a Traffic Department statistical report. The report said most of the drivers involved in the accidents were aged between 20 and 30 years; 44.4 per cent of the total.

The department attributed 18.4 per cent of the accidents to reckless driving, 18.2 to traffic law violations, and 17.6 to loss of control over vehicles. It said of the total number of accidents 261 occurred in Amman, 38 in Irbid, 37 in Zarqa, 14 in Aqaba, 12 in Baqa, 6 in Mafraq, 3 in Madaba, 2 in Ma'an and one Karak.

U.N. health panel seeks to check occupied lands

AMMAN (J.T.) — The World Health Assembly has demanded that Israel allow a United Nations sponsored fact-finding mission to enter the occupied Arab lands in order to investigate the general health conditions of the Arab population and report on the situation, said Minister of Health Aref Bataineh.

One of the main issues discussed by the (WHA) in a two-day meeting in Geneva was the health situation in the Israeli-occupied lands, said Dr. Bataineh Saturday in a statement upon his return to Amman from the meeting.

The minister said the WHO, which was set up by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 1948, reviewed detailed reports on the deteriorating health services in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and called on the world community to extend additional help to the Palestinian people.

Dr. Bataineh said Israel has been banning entry into the occupied lands by all U.N. fact-finding missions since the occupation started in 1967.

100 industrial projects register in April

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 100 industrial projects with a capital of JD 10,975,000 were registered last month with the Ministry of Industry and Trade, sources at the ministry said Saturday. The sources said 23 projects worth

JD 2,031,000 were electrical and engineering industries, 17 projects worth JD 2,755,000 were food industries, six projects worth JD 150,000 chemical industries, 12 projects worth JD 435,000 plastic and

rubber industries, and six projects worth JD 355,000 cosmetic industries. The sources said non-Jordanian capital in these projects totalled JD 1,160,000. They speculate that these ventures will employ 1,010 people.

Delayed building of Karak Italian-financed hospital to start mid-June

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The much-delayed construction of an Italian-financed hospital in the southern town of Karak is scheduled to start in mid-June, with the facility expected to be operational in 24 months, Jordanian and Italian officials said Saturday.

Health Minister Aref Bataineh and Italian Ambassador Romualdo Bettini made the announcement on the fringes of an Italian exhibition of medical equipment and symposium.

"I have been assured by the Italian government that work on the hospital will start in mid-June," Dr. Bataineh told reporters, and Ambassador Bettini concurred.

"We expect the construction work on the hospital to be completed in 20 months, and the facility will be turned over to the Jordanian authorities," Mr. Bettini said.

The Italian contribution to the project is around \$10 million. The Jordanian government has already fulfilled its part of the deal by preparing the land and providing infrastructure such as water, power, etc. at a cost of JD 1.5 million, Dr. Bataineh said.

The project has been delayed for over three years, much of it due to what diplomatic sources describe as "administrative problems and bureaucracy" in the Italian government.

It has drawn controversies and sparked heated debates in Parliament.

According to informed sources, the Council of Ministers has set a June 17 deadline for floating tenders of the hospital project if work does not start before then.

But Ambassador Bettini, who took office here last year, is confident that this time, work will start as scheduled.

"It is a turnkey project undertaken by a well-known Italian company, Tangram, which has proven experience in the field of constructing and equipping hospitals," he said.

"I do not expect any further delay, and believe that the facility will be ready in 20 months time rather than 24 months as envisaged," he added.

Italian assistance to Jordan in the area of health services was the key theme at the opening of a symposium that was launched along with the exhibition of Italian medical equipment at the Inter-Continental Hotel Saturday.

"Jordan and Italy have a long record of cooperation in this area," said Ambassador Bettini, noting that the Italian Hospital in downtown Amman, established in the 1920s, was the first-ever

hospital in Jordan, and another Italian hospital in Karak was the fourth such facility in the Kingdom.

The ambassador also noted that Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Basma were born in the Italian Hospital in Amman.

In the context of ongoing bilateral cooperation, Mr. Bettini said Italian experts were offering regular training to nurses as well as nursing trainers at the Al Basfir government hospital in Ashrafieh, and the Italian government offers scholarships to Jordanian medical students at Italian universities.

In addition, he said, the Italian government also provides medicine and health equipment to the Middle East through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).



Minister of Health Aref Al Bataineh (left) and Italian Ambassador to Jordan Romualdo Bettini Saturday tour an exhibit of Italian medical equipment at the Inter-Continental Hotel

Dr. Bataineh said the Ministry of Health was inclined to give "preferential treatment to Italian products since the prices are right."

"Of course, we cannot force the private sector into importing products from any specific country," the minister said. "But, as is, there is a definite trend in the

market to turn to Italian equipment since their quality is good and prices are competitive."

In addition to focusing on some of the latest advances made in Italy in the area of health services, the symposium also offered an opportunity to Italian manufacturers to present their equip-

ment with detailed explanations.

A team of 15 Italians, representing dozens of companies, and over 60 Jordanians representing the public and private sectors as well as the Jordan Medical Association are attending the symposium and exhibition, which closes its doors Sunday.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of the Young Muslim Women's Society at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition entitled "Fragments: Weavings and Works on Paper" by Kevin A. Hinch and Margaret M. Hinch at the American Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Suha Katibah Noursi at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition of works by artists from Jordan, Iraq and Morocco at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Children's illustration exhibition by Lamin Abdul Sahib at the British Council.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by students from Nazareth College at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Adnan Al Sharif at Baladna Art Gallery.

EUROPEAN FILM WEEK

- ★ British film entitled "Truly, Madly, Deeply" at 5 p.m. and Dutch film entitled "The Vanishing" at 8 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILMS

- ★ Feature film entitled "Sharky's Machine" at 6 p.m. at the American Centre (R-rated, 120 minutes).
- ★ Business video entitled "Coppola Fruit Juices" at the British Council at 7 p.m.

BID INVITATION - (BY SEALED ENVELOPE)

The Ports Corporation — Aqaba

The Ports Corporation wishes to sell by auction the "floating restaurant" which consists of the following parts: Main structure - Barge made of marine steel. Superstructure - (Shelter accommodation) - closed dining room terrace, kitchenware. Those interested in this auction are kindly requested to report to tenders secretary at the Ports Corporation, Aqaba during working hours to collect bid copies against a non-refundable sum of JD 50.

Closing date for the sale of bids is Saturday, May 27, 1993, 12:00 hrs. Deadline for accepting offers is Sunday, June 13, 1993, 10:00 hrs. An accredited cheque or bank guarantee of JD 10,000 should be submitted with offers. Offers submitted by sealed envelope and offers which do not meet above conditions will not be considered.

Dr. Dureid Mahasneh
Director General

Jordan Times

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Upsetting ties

AT A time when an increasing number of countries are insisting that there is really no way to treat civil and political rights separately from economic, social and cultural rights, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are obviously pursuing their policies in the developing countries with two, diametrically opposed, perspectives. It may be true that the world is still divided over the issue of whether civil and political rights are indivisible from the other categories of human rights. Yet there is a broad agreement between the two camps on the existence of links between the two sets. This much has become clear on the eve of the Vienna World Conference scheduled to begin in mid-June. But why the international organisations dealing with global economic development are not operating on the same wavelength with this international consensus is a question that remains to be answered.

A closer look at the austerity and other hardship measures demanded of poor countries as a condition for receiving financial and economic support from the World Bank and the IMF would easily reveal that both government and people in a country have to suffer as a result of implementing such measures. When, for example, governments are called upon to cut food subsidies, curtail support for public services or increase taxation on even basic commodities, the clear implication would be to create new burdens on the masses who are the backbone of viable democracies. Without democracy, there cannot be any meaningful human rights. The end result of the World Bank and the IMF directives is therefore the curtailment of the development of democracies in the underdeveloped countries of the world or at least the shelving of progress.

Maybe it has escaped the attention of international financial institutions that extremism thrives on deprivation and poverty even if in the long run solving such problems is the ultimate aim of their policies. Since underprivileged peoples across the globe cannot be expected to contribute positively to pluralistic democracies as long as their "immediate needs" are not satisfied, these global financial institutions and the other world bodies dealing with human rights are invited to get their priorities right. Perhaps the Vienna meeting would provide an opportunity for all international bodies to synchronise their objectives and the means to attain them. Otherwise, the goals of one set of international institutions would end up being frustrated by another group of world bodies.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily Saturday commented on a commentary on Israel Radio which strongly criticised Syrian President Hafez Al Assad for not reaching an agreement with Israel on separate peace. The commentary included a call on the Syrian government to send a press delegation to Israel and ascertain for itself what it called a real and genuine desire on the part of the Israeli public and government to reach a final settlement, said the paper. Such propaganda campaigns can by no means deceive Syria which has more than once reaffirmed its clear position that peace should be comprehensive, the paper continued. It said it is not by mere statements that peace and security can be achieved in the Middle East, but through concrete steps and through deeds rather than words. On the ground, Israel has proved working in a direction totally opposite to peace through its continued repression in the occupied lands and through its intransigent position at the peace negotiations, the paper pointed out. It was Israel's intransigence and its rejection of the implementation of U.N. resolutions, said the paper, that rendered the ninth round of talks in Washington a total failure. The paper referred to Israel's continued terrorist practices, its mass arrests and murder of the Palestinian people as examples of its determination to abort any peace bid. Peace is not made through media campaigns and falsification of facts, said the paper, but rather through concrete steps aiming to reach peace, and through withdrawal from Arab lands. The paper stressed that Syria has repeatedly stated its position, demanding a full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands in exchange for complete peace, noting that only when this demand has been met can peace be achieved.

DESPITE THE invalidation of the Iraqi 25-dinar banknote, some moneychangers and money traders in the black market are keen on collecting the cancelled currency, said Fahd Al Fanek in a column published in Al Ra'i Arabic daily. The writer said that two categories of people are now keen on buying the defunct currency. Some clients had asked that moneychangers keep for them certain amounts of these dinars, under lock and key, lest they should lose it, explained the writer. He said that the second category is that of smugglers and speculators who collect the dinars to smuggle them through Syria and Turkey to Iraqi Kurdistan where there are billions of cancelled Iraqi dinars. The Kurds are waiting for a solution through the United Nations or through the Western coalition. They are hoping that the Western nations will release Iraqi assets in hard currency to provide cover for a new form of Kurdish currency to serve as a substitute for the Iraqi currency, said the writer. He said the speculators hope that they will thus exchange the cancelled currency with the new Kurdish units and so make a fortune. The writer said that this evil plot is aimed at causing severe harm to the Iraqi economy and therefore should be countered by all possible means. The writer called on the concerned Jordanian authorities to confiscate the cancelled currency and prevent the speculators from committing this dishonourable and immoral action against the Iraqi people.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

Sales tax

Which way does the balance tip?

The government finally gave in to the special-interest pressure groups and decided to dismiss the sales tax for the time being. Many individuals in the private sector, as well as outspoken politicians, rejoiced. So far no one came up with a list of alleged gains that may accrue to the country or the people due to killing the law. Perhaps there are no gains worth mentioning, because a sales tax as a replacement to the current consumption tax would not have increased the overall tax burden or raised the prices and the cost of living.

The losses however, which will be suffered by businessmen, especially importers and industrialists, will soon become obvious. They lost all the advantages and concessions which would have been introduced by the new law, as compared to the current harsh law of the consumption tax, such as:

- Abolishing the confiscation of commodities and transportation vehicles used in the evasion of the tax.
- Reduction of the fine for tax evasion, equal to the value of the subject merchandise instead of double the value, as it is now under the consumption tax.
- Abolishing the authority of the minister of finance to suspend operations of factories that commit a breach of the law.
- Replacement of direct supervision of customs' representatives by accounting records, which is more convenient to industry, and obviously more civilised.
- Removal of licensing fees which the Customs Department used to levy on factories, according to the current law of the consumption tax.
- The widening of the tax base to become fairer and closer to neutrality.

Besides the above mentioned losses to the private sector, the delay in enacting the sales tax law may bring a major risk to the Jordanian economy, which threatens the current economic prosperity and causes the hard-won stability to be severely altered or even reversed, if the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were to decide that the failure of the government to implement the sales tax amounts to a major default under the economic adjustment programme and runs contrary to the commitments made in the letters of intent issued by the government in June

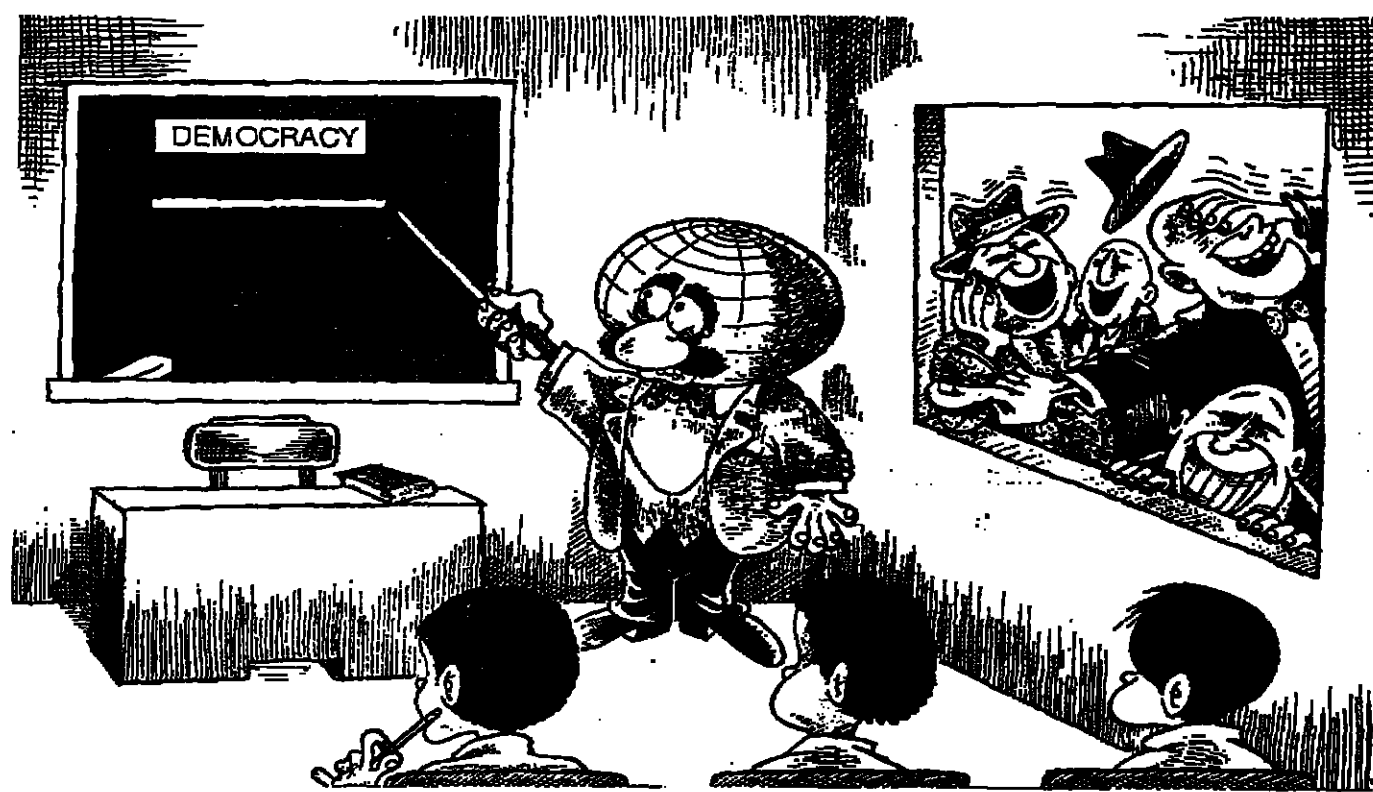
1992 and reiterated in December 1992. The implementation of the sales tax is not merely a recommendation, or a desired reform, but a condition and a performance criterion under the adjustment programme.

If the IMF refuses to extend time and to certify to the Paris Club that Jordan is implementing properly the agreed adjustment programme, the club may not agree to reschedule Jordan's debts falling due between July 1, 1993 and December 31, 1994. This will threaten Jordan's current financial and monetary stability. Jordan shall, in that case, be required to pay around \$100 million a month in principal and interest, or be deprived of the hundreds of millions of dollars in soft loans and grants currently flowing to the country from Europe, Japan, the U.S. and international institutions such as the World Bank. Such eventuality will bring the Jordanian economy back to the atmosphere of crisis which was experienced in 1988.

One wonders why the government made a definite commitment to implement a general sales tax and authorise the minister of finance and the governor of the Central Bank to sign two letters of intent to that effect if, after all, it did not have the will to carry out its obligations. Why did the ministers find no difficulty in making a decision behind closed doors and approving the general sales tax draft law yet hesitate about how to do so in the open? Should we blame democracy or the double standard of the ministers who intend to run for the upcoming parliamentary elections?

At any rate, the objecting ministers proved the point that they are not capable of leading the people, but are led by the street even at the risk of endangering the economic stability and prosperity in the country, a result that the people are not aware of.

Perhaps it is not too late for this or the next government to act responsibly and maintain the excellent credibility of the management of the Jordanian economy, salvage the economic adjustment programme and protect the achievements of the Jordanian economy. Out of a sense of national responsibility we shall keep the pressure on the government to do the right thing and we shall not give up on the ability of our people to understand.



M. KAHIL

How much liberty can one be allotted? 'Wider participation is needed to recapture the ideals of democracy'

By Mary Lenton

WE IN the West tend to characterise democracy as a good thing, versus totalitarianism, the bad thing. But we should also remember it is possible to have too much of a good thing. In the past decade many countries — Poland, South Africa — have moved towards democracy to the extent that the "end of history" and the triumph of liberal democracy have been proclaimed.

Yet without Communism as a contrast, democracy does not look so desirable. It is having difficulty coping with conflict-ridden, economically backward, ex-Communist and Third World states, where expectations outstrip practical possibilities. Even in established democracies there are fears that liberal democracy has lost its way, that it needs redefining and revitalising or replacing. Perhaps voter apathy is a sign of democratic over-indulgence or maybe it is just complacency. Is democracy, as Churchill said, the worst form of government, except for all other forms? It still faces problems, in the attempts of many countries to democratise and improve their economies and in the growth of international institutions that need to be made accountable.

A central problem is that the meaning of "democracy" is not always clear. In its time the label has been applied to the whole spectrum of political systems. However, we generally associate it with ideas such as liberty and equality, which appear to be desirable. But it is arguable that we can have too much of them and that they are impossible to achieve completely. For example, abso-

lute equality of opportunity would lead to a meritocracy — places in society determined by merit alone, leaving those at the bottom knowing they were inferior and with no hope of ever climbing the social ladder; this might lead to conflict.

Easier to see is that complete liberty is also impossible and potentially undesirable. Too much individual liberty for everyone is impossible; either we are constrained by laws or the "law of the jungle" allows some to use their liberty at the expense of others. So it is possible to have too much of some of the ideals behind democracy. Yet democracy has always been pragmatic about them; it uses consent of the people as the basis for its governments' legitimacy, so, in theory, preserving individual liberty without anarchy. The ideals may be a facade, but we need to ask whether we can have too much democracy in practice.

The critique of democracy in the West that dominated the eighties was linked to the economic liberalism Thatcherism and Reaganism tried to espouse. They shared Locke's view; individuals know their own interests best, so paternalistic government is oppressive. They argued that the state had penetrated many social and economic spheres in which it had no business: through nationalisation, subsidies, the Welfare State. Individual liberty had been lost. Minimum government was required. We had had enough of the type of democracy sought by politicians of the post-war consensus. People want to make more of their own choices,

not leave so many to government.

An alternative critique focuses on increasing voter apathy, widespread distrust of politicians, on groups that have been marginalised, such as women and the underclass, on the problems of bureaucracy and democracy's links with capitalism and liberalism. Capitalism thrives on inequalities.

Schumpeter argued that it had helped to downgrade democracy from an end in itself to merely a means for procuring material benefits for people. The large economic organisations and government bureaucracies needed to run a modern nation have an impersonal nature; power congregates in oligarchies at the top.

Some argue that liberalism encourages concentration on the private sphere of individuals at the expense of the public sphere or the wider community. Benjamin Barber said: "Without participation in the common life that defines them and the decision making that shapes their social habitat, women and men cannot become individuals. Freedom, justice, equality and autonomy are all products of common thinking and common living." He believes liberal democracy has failed in its task to adapt pure bureaucracy to the realities of governing a large nation. We have had too much of such democracy. A more participatory form is required, following a subsidiarity principle. Most decisions should be taken at local level, with bigger ones made through referendums.

It seems to me that the first

critique means more freedom for some, at great expense to others who become marginalised from the political system by great social and economic inequalities. Some government interference is needed, reducing inequalities to a level where they do not threaten the stability of the state and leave no one totally destitute. Interference to reduce inequalities can go too far, as in the "political correctness" movement. But the first critique's view leads us too close to the opposite, equally unsavoury, extreme. I echo Lincoln in saying we need government, "of the people, by the people and for the people".

Our government often seems a preserve of white, middle-aged and upper-class, middle-aged men. Wider participation is needed to recapture the ideals that, imperfect as they are, form the basis of democracy, and in turn encourage more participation. But persuading individuals to participate when they are disillusioned with the system is difficult.

What is needed is politicians living up to, and being seen to be putting into action more, the ideals of democracy. Voters have had too much of politicians not keeping promises. Greater participation would make both more difficult. Voters could punish such behaviour more directly. The model is self-sustaining but needs something to start it. I suggest politicians acting more responsibly and the devolution of more power to local communities. Under such a system, far fewer people would become disillusioned — The Independent.

New hope for a global ban on chemical weapons

By Clare Pedrick

ROME — It took more than a quarter of a century of often acrimonious talks to get there. And when the accord was finally signed, the event was hardly met by fanfares. Yet arms experts say the long-awaited chemical weapons treaty, which poses a global ban on the use, development and production of toxic gas warfare agents, could prove to be one of the most significant in the history of disarmament.

Some 137 nations have signed the convention, drawn up in Geneva in mid-January 26 years after the first talks began. The multilateral treaty is a historic one in the field of arms control in that it "is the first treaty where a decision has been taken to eliminate a whole class of weapons," according to British chemical weapons expert Julian Perry Robinson of Sussex University's Science Policy Research Unit. The "Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) and Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and such like simply placed ceilings on weapons, but this one aims to eradicate the whole kettle of fish. In that sense, it is a considerable step forward."

Since their debut in World War I, when mustard gas was used in the trenches, chemical weapons have remained one of the most terrible and sinister agents of warfare. On the rare occasions when they have been used, the effects have been devastating.

The gruesome gamut of weapons ranges from mustard gas — still considered one of the most effective chemical agents even now — to nerve gas, choking agents, incapacitating agents and blood agents. Blood agents interfere with the blood's ability to transport oxygen around the body. One of its best known forms is hydrogen cyanide, which was used until recently in the U.S. as a means of executing criminals on death row.

Information is sketchy about which countries have stockpiles of chemical weapons and the capacity to produce them. "There is something that people find creepy about chemical and biological weapons that they do not find creepy about other weapons," said Perry Robinson, who has written several books and articles on the subject and closely followed the negotiations. "This means that they do not talk about them, so we have to rely on intelligence reports, and of course, they only tell you what they want to tell you."

Some estimates claim as many as 20 states could have chemical weapons or access to them. The number with actual stockpiles is thought to be considerably lower — probably eight: the former USSR, the U.S., Syria, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea and Israel.

Many of the industrialised countries which had chemical weapons 50 years ago, and which pioneered their development, have eliminated their arsenals as more sophisticated military technology took over. "Over the past 30 years countries like Britain and France have got rid of their chemical weapons," said Mr. Robinson. "In the 1960s, they came to the conclusion that all the things these weapons could do could be done by other technologies just as well, and much less obviously."

But some of the world's less wealthy nations have seized on chemical arsenals as a useful terror tactic to have up their sleeve, especially in the absence of nuclear capacity. Said Mr. Robinson: "Now you have countries which do not have nuclear weapons which may consider chemical weapons as a substitute for them. These are effective weapons, they can do things others cannot, a little goes a long way and they are good terror weapons, if terror is what you are after."

The realisation that chemical weapons might be proliferating in the Third World, the horror of the Iran-Iraq war and the fear that such tactics might be used in the Gulf war all played an important role in pushing the negotiations to a conclusion, say arms experts. "The Iran-Iraq war certainly forced people to think where their interests might lie on chemical weapons," said Mr. Robinson. "If you are a rich industrialised country, able to afford more sophisticated weapons, it may not be in your interest to have cheap powerful chemical weapons around you, especially in a world which is looking increasingly to North-South tensions."

The end of the cold war created a climate of greater trust between the two major holders of chemical weapons arsenals — the U.S. and the former USSR. But the break-up of the Soviet Union also

sounded alarm bells about the risk of such dangerous substances being in the hands of the break-away republics. The virtual certainty that three regimes deemed dangerous to world security — Iran, Iraq and Libya — all had arsenals galvanised the international community into taking steps to control toxic gas proliferation. "The experience with Iran, Iraq and Libya clearly showed that by using the so-called normal export control mechanism you cannot stop proliferation," said Dr. Thomas Stock, head of the chemical and biological warfare armament and disarmament project at Stockholm's International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

A major breakthrough in the negotiations came when the U.S. agreed to relinquish the right to use chemical weapons in retaliation to similar attacks by an enemy. Washington had been among the most vocal claimants of the right to use chemical weapons as a reprisal. "The U.S. always insisted that they should have the possibility to use chemical weapons if they were hit first," said Dr. Stock. "After the second Gulf war, they gave that right up."

The U.S. and Russia, both of whom signed in Geneva, have pledged to ratify the treaty — a crucial point given that these two nations hold the largest arsenals of chemical weapons — say analysts. Other significant signatories of the treaty include India, Pakistan, China and Iran. Although the Arab League issued a statement against ratifying the treaty, unless Israel signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia signed the Geneva agreement.

"There are also some countries in the South-East Asia region, especially North Korea, which have not signed and which we are worried about," said Dr. Stock. "It is claimed that North Korea has chemical weapons as well as nuclear weapons."

The treaty is due to enter into force in 1995 but will only be implemented if a minimum of 65 states ratify the accord. Nations who ratify the agreement must destroy all their chemical weapons by the year 2005, or by 2010 at the latest. Although 137 states have so far signed the treaty, ratification may not necessarily follow, experts caution. "Signing is an important first step, but that does not necessarily lead to ratification," said Dr. Stock. "That is something we have learned from other disarmament treaties."

The Geneva treaty is widely acknowledged as one of the most far-reaching accords in that it makes strict provisions for the elimination of chemical weapons arsenals and for checking that member states have complied.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), much criticised after the discovery that Iraq had been trying to build a nuclear arsenal, is generally held to afford too much leeway to signatory states who are breaking the rules. With this in mind, negotiators of the chemical weapons treaty have introduced a no-nonsense monitoring and inspection mechanism.

But the treaty's complex verification mechanism is a costly process. Even more expensive is the cost of destroying the chemical weapons. In both cases, the financial burden is to be borne by the countries themselves. Said Dr. Stock: "It is a principle of the treaty that if you build up weapons, you must pay for the destruction of these weapons."

That principle almost led to a last-minute breakdown in the Geneva talks when the Russians announced they could not afford to foot the bill for eliminating their considerable arsenal. Compared with some more sophisticated military technology, chemical weapons are relatively inexpensive to manufacture. But destroying them is an expensive business. Experts estimate the cost may be up to ten times that of production.

Incineration is the most common method, but new technologies have been developed including chemical neutralisation and bio-degradation — using bacteria to decompose toxic waste. "The technology is available and so is the experience," said Dr. Stock. "Several countries, including the U.S., Canada, the former Soviet Union and to a lesser extent Germany, have been working on chemical warfare agents. But it does cost a lot of money. It has been estimated that it will cost Russia 100 billion rubles (\$15 billion) for the destruction of its stockpiles and that is an unbelievable amount, so Russia could have a serious problem" — World News Link.

Features

Patriotism or profits?
Israelis seek Golan homesBy Colleen Siegel
Reuters

KATZRIN, Golan Heights — Homes for sale. Attractive location near disputed border. Easy terms. Uncertain future. Chance for quick profit.

The prospect has drawn 500 applications for 250 government-built houses in Katzrin, the largest Jewish town on the Golan Heights which Israel captured from Syria in 1967.

Some of the applicants are Israeli patriots, hoping to secure the land for the country's future in spite of a growing possibility that a peace treaty might return the Golan to Syria.

But others, local people say, are opportunists, hoping for a quick shekel, like the compensation paid to settlers who had to leave the Sinai peninsula after Israel's 1979 treaty with Egypt.

"I assume there are such people," conceded Meir Munitz, deputy mayor of Katzrin. "No reason there shouldn't be, there are all sorts of people here."

He said half the 500 applicants are from Katzrin and surrounding areas, the rest from across Israel. The houses are the first of 750 started in Katzrin during the rapid settlement policies of the Likud government which was voted out of office last year.

Nominal prices of the houses are 110,000 to 130,000 shekels (\$40,000 to \$47,000) but the terms effectively cut the cost in half. A monthly payment of 300 shekels (\$109) buys a semi-detached cottage.

It's an inviting chance for

Nabum Barsky, 38, a beaming Russian immigrant who has lived with his family in rented quarters at Katzrin for nearly three years and loves the wild, open space of the Golan plateau.

He resents the fact that people from outside might beat him in the lottery which will decide who gets the houses.

And he doubts government will ever enforce its condition that buyers must actually move in to get reduced terms.

"It's not fair... they'll buy and then rent them out," Mr. Barsky said. He had only contempt for speculators: "That it exists is no secret... What kind of person would sell their homeland?"

Katzrin, a town of 4,200 Israelis with only three per cent unemployment and clean main streets divided by stately palm trees, seems to float high above the Sea of Galilee.

The 15,000 Israelis who have settled on the Golan once thought that the military value of the plateau guaranteed them a future.

Israeli governments vowed never to let Syrians back to positions from which they had shelled Jewish settlements hundreds of metres below. In 1981 Israel extended its laws over the area in what was seen as virtual annexation.

Even when Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin came to office last year and scrapped grants and easy mortgages attracting settlers to parts of the West Bank, he kept them in force on the Golan. Times have changed.

In Israel's 17-month-old peace

talks with its Arab neighbours, Mr. Rabin has offered to pull back troops "on" the Golan. He carefully avoided saying "from." But he added uncertainty by acknowledging he faced pressure for a total withdrawal.

Syrian President Hafez Al Assad has demanded the return of all the heights, which he failed to retake in a 1973 war.

Mr. Munitz, who moved to Katzrin from Jerusalem in 1981, was dismissive: "We hope this government will fall before it comes to that," he said.

But settler activists in the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank, consider Golan settlers defeatists, all too ready to contemplate surrendering their homes.

Shmuel Naphitali has lived in Katzrin for 16 years and signed up for one of the 250 homes on sale.

But he feels so unsure of the future he can not decide whether to replace a rundown fence around the home occupied by his divorced wife.

"It's complete confusion. You don't know what to plan. But then you say 'we can't think that way. We need to keep struggling,'" he said.

The mere thought of leaving the Golan brought tears to the eyes of Mr. Barsky, who trained in Russia as an orchestra conductor and works in Israel as a security guard.

But asked about the prospect of compensation, he said he could only be practical: "If I had no choice, I'd tell you, I wouldn't throw away the money."

By Max de Lotbinière

LONDON — The multibillion dollar business of selling products in western supermarkets and shopping malls is about to take the moral high ground. The 1980s was the decade of the green consumer — who bought products that were environmentally friendly. The 1990s are set to become the decade of the ethical consumer. According to marketing experts, the first question consumers will ask won't be whether a product is good for them or the environment but where it came from and how buying it will benefit the person who made it.

The success of green consumerism and the results of market research are making companies take note of changing attitudes among those who buy their products. A recent survey by Mintel showed that 70 per cent of the U.K. public are concerned about ethical issues, with 22 per cent "strongly ethical" and actively avoiding products they perceive to be unethical. With statistics like these, companies are asking themselves whether they can afford not to give ethical consumers what they want.

For U.K. aid agencies and charities involved in Third World development, the change in perception has opened up the possibility of achieving their long-held objective. If trade is to be truly ethical, people at the beginning of the chain — producers and workers in Third World countries — should, for the first time, be able to claim a fair share of the benefits.

Development campaigners know that if the momentum behind ethical consumerism is to be maintained and the concept made a success, it needs the cooperation of business. Above all, they want to get the message across to consumers that a trip to the shops can directly benefit the lives of other people.

One U.K. campaign group, the World Development Movement (WDM), is working to increase public awareness about the importance of trade. Its latest campaign, launched in London in March, highlights the crippling effect trade barriers have on Third World economies.

Using the slogan "Stop the Stitch Up," WDM claims that trade blocks on Third World clothes cost poor countries £32 billion (\$48 billion) a year, nearly as much as all western aid combined. The campaign targets the European Community and its trade policy, which protects the EC garment industry. WDM wants all Third World textile and clothing import quotas phased out within 10 years, starting with the poorest countries.

Ethical questions are not new to U.K. consumers. Consumers pressured shops to boycott South African products. Only recently — now that the reform process is under way and the trade embargo lifted — has the "Made in South Africa" label reappeared on supermarket shelves.

To be successful, WDM has to change the minds of EC policymakers. The message to consumers and voters in the U.K. is simple and compelling: WDM research shows that quotas add an extra £44 (\$66) a year to the clothing costs of an average U.K. family.

U.K. member of parliament Glenda Jackson was on hand at the launching of WDM's campaign to lend support and counter protectionists' claims that cheaper imports threaten the livelihood of workers at home. She argued that stronger Third World economies, earning more hard currency from exports, can, in turn, buy more EC-produced goods, ensuring

ETHICAL CONSUMPTION

Who benefits from our buying?



Farida Akhtar: Local (Bangladeshi) garment industry has improved the lives of women workers and their families

ing jobs in the EC for the foreseeable future.

"Aid has not and never will be the solution to the appalling problems of poverty in Third World," she said. "We must continue to give aid, but it is not enough. We have got to argue and encourage and change the prevailing climate so that trade of manufactured goods from the Third World can actually reach our markets."

Three Bangladesh workers' rights activists added their voices to the launching of the WDM campaign. For Farida Akhtar, head of a leading Bangladesh women's support group and spokeswoman for the three, this was a rare opportunity to express the views of the workers she represents. The WDM has highlighted Bangladesh because it is

penalised by EC quotas and is defined by the U.N. as a Least Developed Country, desperately in need of its small but prospering garment industry.

Industry has created much-needed jobs in Bangladesh and, as Ms. Akhtar points out, has transformed the lives of Bangladeshi women, who make up the majority of the work force. Without that work, the consequences for women, in particular, would be dire. Although the priority for women in Bangladesh society is marriage, Ms. Akhtar explained, in poor families it is not possible because of the high cost of dowries.

"If they have to earn a living, the option was to become a housemaid in a middle-class family, which is no less than slavery. They are given food and clothing

but no other benefits. If they don't want to be housemaids, the options are even worse. They sell themselves for prostitution or are trafficked out of the country or even turn to the organ trade. If we close down the option of garment work for these women, they are under much more risk."

In Bangladesh, the concept of women going out of the family home to work is alien to the country's Muslim traditions and has encountered strong opposition. Here, too, Ms. Akhtar believes there have been changes for the better. "Before, it was thought that once a woman was outside the home she was bad — not pure any more," she said. "That is no longer true. People see she is earning an income, supporting her family and not doing anything bad. The situation is much clearer."

For decades, aid agencies have been trying to improve living standards in just such ways. WDM argues that the experience of Bangladesh's garment workers proves the simplest, most direct route is to allow trade to work.

When a cheap labour force organises and demands better conditions and pay, one alternative for unscrupulous employers has been to move operations to countries where workers' rights are not protected. Ms. Akhtar admits that this was the case with the Bangladesh garment industry — it was relocated there when workers in Sri Lanka demanded better conditions. She believes there are now fewer countries where exploitative employers can go.

Ms. Akhtar says some of the strongest opposition to establishing better working conditions comes from the garment workers themselves, who do not want to risk losing their jobs. She and her colleagues have to change the way employers think. "Manufacturers should know that if they look after the interests of the workers, they won't have less profit. They will have more productivity," she said. "That is the education they should have and they should understand that is important."

If products are to have ethical value, consumers in the West will need concrete guarantees against exploitation, which will be difficult to deliver. WDM campaigns

co-ordinator Ben Jackson acknowledged that the problem lies in the complexity of the trade chain between producer and consumer. Making accountability viable in the garment trade is difficult because of the involvement of middlemen and agents.

Despite obstacles, development agencies in the U.K. such as WDM, Oxfam and Cafod have shown a willingness to meet the demands of ethical consumers. Establishing the Fairtrade Foundation this year, Director Richard Adams has the job of convincing consumers a product for sale in a shop is produced by people who have "an image and working conditions that meet or exceed minimum acceptable standards."

The Fairtrade Mark scheme is to be launched in the autumn of its products like tea and coffee by Standards will be set by independent experts. Conditions will be checked regularly and standard \$12 will be reviewed to encourage progressive improvement in the future work place.

Mr. Adams points to the success of similar schemes in other European countries. For the Fairtrade Mark to be a success, it needs consumer and business support. "We have to sell the story to the manufacturers and processors," he said. "They have to be assured that the whole thing is objective... The manufacturer is looking for protection from a in the form of a well worked out systematic and objective scale of standards."

While much of the Fairtrade Mark's success lies in the cooperation of business, much also rests on consumer awareness. The educational campaign will take time and will start with basic commodities.

Manufactured products like garments, which are the foundation of economic development in Third World countries, will take longer to be assessed for Fairtrade Marks. Whether the scheme will have enough time to take root — in the world's marketing hype and fashion, ethical consumerism — remains to be seen — World News Link.

Spirit of 1968 lives on at
student rebellion's birthplaceBy Christopher Burns
The Associated Press

NANTERRE, France — "It is forbidden to forbid" is enshrined in a college hall with other graffiti and posters marking the birthplace of a rebellion that rocked France in May 1968.

On the 25th anniversary of the student-worker revolt against the establishment, those who were at the barricades and others not even born then agree that while France has changed, the spirit expressed in that slogan lives on. "We're proud of that past," said Laetitia Bessit, 19, a history student at Nanterre University. "We'd be out in the streets again" if threatened with educational belt-tightening.

The '68 demonstrations erupted in early May with the shutdown of Nanterre, a western Paris suburb, and protests by hundreds of thousands in the capital. At times, normal French life all but came to a halt.

Nighttime street battles with police, a month-long student occupation of the Sorbonne and a general strike by 10 million workers jarred a nation that in many ways was stuck in the past.

Demonstrators demanded reforms in France's ossified central government, denounced entrenched ideas in education and business, and shouted for an end to the Vietnam war. Near the Sorbonne, students took over the Odeon Theatre to debate a new society.

"We were a very closed society," said Marc Kravetz, 50, an editor at the leftist daily Liberation who took part in the protests. Economic modernisation under President Charles de Gaul-

le "hadn't been accompanied by social change."

Daniel Cohn-Bendit, the fiery protest leader nicknamed "Danny the red," summed up his involvement by saying, "I'm basically anti-authoritarian."

German-born Cohn-Bendit, 49, is now a mayoral assistant in Frankfurt.

In the years since 1968, France's government has sought to decentralise, the workplace has become more democratic, education more progressive and the voting age has been lowered to 18.

The government legalised abortion and abolished the death penalty. At Nanterre, halls long padded with political posters have been stripped and painted. Artists were hired to create murals of graffiti, drawings and pieces of old posters from 1968.

"It is forbidden not to dream," reads one. "Under the cobblestones, the beach," says another, referring to the sand under the streets students tore up to build barricades and stone police.

Bulletin boards display posters calling for rallies against alleged police brutality, government plans to limit immigrant students and the Serb offensive in Bosnia. The hallowed halls of the Sorbonne, where philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre spoke during the student occupation, now display class schedules and ads for cheap student trips.

A few signs of radical activism exist — a student hands out anti-fascist flyers. But the encircled cross symbol of the rightist National Front is painted on a wall.

"Students don't see the necessity to oppose the extreme

right," said Luc Chevalier, 21, an English major.

Students in '68 skipped final exams to build barricades. Anne Melin, 20, a literature student, said she wouldn't go that far.

"My father's going to be unemployed soon, so I've got to pass my classes," she said.

But she and other students said they would turn out in the streets if austerity measures are imposed on education. The government backed off similar reforms in 1988 amid protests by students who were joined by their parents — unlike in 1968.

In 1968, students burned hundreds of cars, smashed windows, toppled trees and ripped up streets to make their statement. "In five minutes, the trees were cut down with chainsaws and the cobblestones were piled... (10 feet) high," said Gilles Boivin, 49.

Now a contractor, he was a magazine photographer covering a demonstration outside the Gare de Lyon train station.

Protesters rained rocks on police, who fired back with tear gas. In a month of unrest, more than 1,500 people were hurt in Paris alone. One person died in Paris and three in the provinces.

In a conservative backlash, 800,000 people filled the Champs-Elysees in support of the Gaullist government May 31.

De Gaulle dissolved parliament and fired Premier Georges Pompidou, credited with conciliatory moves during the unrest. Conservatives won a landslide victory in June elections.

But de Gaulle was on his way out. In 1969 he retired after losing a referendum. Pompidou succeeded him.

Paradise lost seeks to stage another comeback

By Rohan Gunasekera
Reuters

COLOMBO — For many older Sri Lankans, their Indian Ocean island of unspoiled golden beaches, tea plantations and a rich cultural heritage is paradise lost.

After independence from Britain in 1948, the country then known as Ceylon looked set to boom — with an educated workforce, comparatively good infrastructure, and rich Gulf and Asian markets in easy reach.

"Sri Lanka was a lovely place to live in around the time we got independence," said Stanley Jayewardena, chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils had shared the island for around 2,000 years. But growing mistrust and suspicions between the two communities — partly sparked by a post-independence decision to make Sinhala the only official language — led to a succession of communal riots.

In 1983 the Tamil campaign for more autonomy became a full-

scale insurgency after Sinhalese mobs killed hundreds of Tamils in retaliation for the death of 13 Sinhalese soldiers in a Tamil rebel ambush.

The bloodbath was a watershed. Over 28,000 people have died since then in a virtual civil war.

"It was a tremendously costly setback," Mr. Jayewardena said. In 1988-1990, the island suffered another bout of violence when at least 7,000 people died in a revolt by Sinhalese rebels of the Marxist People's Liberation Front.

The government crushed the uprising ruthlessly. Human rights groups say tens of thousands are still missing.

May Day brought another disaster when a suicide bomber killed President Ranasinghe Premadasa and 23 others. Police blamed the main Tamil rebel group, which denied involvement.

Tamils, who account for over 2.5 million of the 17 million population, say they have been discriminated against by successive governments favouring the Sinhalese majority.

Analysts say the island's woes stem from the inability of successive governments to rise above petty party politics, the use of violence to coerce Tamils, and populist welfare measures that retarded economic growth.

Others said the ruling United National Party (UNP) and the opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), which have governed since independence, share the blame since neither party gave the other a chance to meet Tamil demands for autonomy.

Sri Lanka

"Each party was afraid that if they let the other party solve the ethnic problem when in power, their chances of being reelected would be hit," admitted a UNP parliamentarian.

Commentator Hector Abhayawardhana said Tamils themselves were sometimes communal-minded, looking at the problem from a narrow Tamil perspective instead of from a national viewpoint.

Free rice, health care and

education, and tight state control of the economy until liberalisation in 1977 drained state coffers and stifled growth.

"We squandered our economic resources without increasing productivity or industrialising," Mr. Jayewardena said.

Neither the UNP nor the SLFP have hesitated to beat the communal drum to win votes when economic growth failed to keep pace with the population increase and rising aspirations, said another analyst who declined to be named.

"They did not want to lose Sinhalese votes by being seen as selling out to the Tamils," he added.

He said attacks against Tamils in 1956, 1957 and 1983 hardened attitudes and pushed young people into militancy.

Although some Tamil demands have been met, others remain. Tamil was made a national language and a system of regional councils created to meet their demands for greater autonomy.

But peace talks have stalled on the crucial rebel demand to merge the northern and eastern provinces, which Tamils consider

their traditional homeland.

Many Sinhalese oppose the merger, which they fear could be a stepping stone to a separate state. Substantial numbers of Muslims and Sinhalese also live in the eastern province.

President Dingiri Banda Wijetunga's new government faces two pressing problems — ending the Tamil insurgency and continuing economic reforms that have enticed foreign investors and delighted the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The mild-mannered and unassuming Wijetunga was largely seen as a makeshift candidate to preserve party unity after the assassination. But in the eyes of some analysts, he has made an encouraging start.

He invited Tamil rebels for peace talks and assured investors that liberal economic reforms would continue. New Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, 44, has the confidence of the investor community.

Critics say Mr. Wijetunga as prime minister was Premadasa's puppet and his present government is just a makeshift one.

Both Premadasa and his predecessor Junius Jayewardena were strong presidents, reducing the role of parliament and ruling largely as they chose. But some think a change to a less autocratic style may be overdue.

One Tamil analyst said: "Ever since the Tamil problem surfaced, we have had strong leaders but what has got us — more trouble. A 'weak' president, who listens to others, may be just the prescription we need."

The new government moved quickly to deploy troops and police and prevent anti-Tamil riots after the assassination.

"The government has to be commended for preventing a backlash," said Panarajasingham Joseph, a Tamil parliamentarian. "Tension has eased."

The economy, with growth of around four per cent over the past five years, has proved remarkably resilient to violence. Tourism, for instance, has begun improving. But the best beaches are still in rebel-controlled areas.

"The single biggest investment Sri Lanka can make today is to have peace and harmony," said Mr. Jayewardena. "The returns will be enormous."



U.K. members of parliament Glenda Jackson (second) and Peter Luff (second right) symbolically 'cut' trade barriers at the launching of the World Development Movement (WDM) campaign to support Third World Economies (WNL)

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Yeltsin decree gives privatisation a boost

MOSCOW (AP) — Empowered by his recent referendum victory, Russian President Boris Yeltsin issued a decree Friday speeding up the sale of state-owned enterprises to private investors.

Thousands of state factories already have been organised as stockholders' companies, but in many cases the shares have remained in the hands of workers, managers and the state.

The decree says all such companies must sell at least 29 per cent of their stock in public auctions within three months of the

reorganisation. Mr. Yeltsin's order is aimed at preventing the directors of state factories from delaying privatisation, or privatising in name only. It says that if factory managers obstruct the privatisation process, government officials can step in and sell shares in those factories to the public.

The decree also will widen the choice of investments that Russians can make with their "privatisation vouchers." The vouchers, with a face value of 10,000 rubles (\$11) each, were distributed last year to every citizen.

Mr. Yeltsin has called privatisation the key to the success of Russia's free-market reforms. But the process has frequently stalled and been caught in the political tug-of-war between Mr. Yeltsin and his parliamentary rivals.

Friday's decree "became possible only after the referendum" on April 25 in which Russians expressed confidence in Mr. Yeltsin and his reforms, said Sergei Vasiliev, director of the Centre for Economic Reform, which advises the government. Mr. Vasiliev said the decree

was drafted three months ago, but Mr. Yeltsin had delayed its introduction because of strong opposition inside as well as outside his administration.

"Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and other leaders in the government opposed it," Mr. Vasiliev told the Associated Press. "The key message behind this decree is that no one will be allowed to hamper the process anymore."

Mr. Yeltsin signed the decree May 8, but it was not distributed until Friday, when a summary was published by the business

newspaper Kommersant. According to the summary, companies in the food, services, transportation and trade sectors that are earmarked for privatisation have until Aug. 1 to sell shares to the public.

The decree directs the government to ensure that 2,000 additional companies are privatised by the end of June.

Of Russia's 220,000 state enterprises, about 61,000 have been privatised, raising 287 billion rubles (\$317 billion), as of April 20th, according to a Western consultant close to the process.

Kuwait expects deficit-free budget in 3 years

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Kuwait expects its budget deficit, which was widened by the Iraqi invasion, to disappear as oil income rises and extra revenue comes from new services fees, Finance Minister Nasser Al-Rodhan has said. He told the United Arab Emirates daily Al-Bayan that oil earnings had steadily risen since the liberation of Kuwait and were projected at around 2.5 billion dinars (\$8.5 billion) in the fiscal year starting July 1. The deficit is declining and is projected at one billion dinars (\$3.4 billion) in 1993-1994, he said.

"This means there are serious attempts to cut the deficit. We are trying to reach a balance between spending and revenues in the next three years," he added.

Like other wealthy Gulf states, Kuwait suffered from a budget deficit before the 1990 invasion due to a fall in oil prices.

China announces increase in bank interest rates

BEDING (AP) — The central bank announced Friday an increase in interest rates to cool off mounting inflation that could threaten China's fast-paced economic development.

Economists have been urging the People's Bank of China to make such a move for months to stem steadily worsening inflation. China's retail price index rose 8.6 per cent in the first quarter, but inflation in major cities was nearly twice as high.

The government acknowledges

that easy credit, while helping fuel China's impressive economic growth under senior leader Deng Xiaoping's market-style reforms, has also caused prices to rise, first in production materials and later in consumer goods.

Skyrocketing prices in 1988 helped win popular support for the pro-democracy protests the following year that were violently suppressed by the government.

The present interest rate rise is timely since it will dispel the public fear of inflation and will

restore confidence," Lin Tao, an economics expert with the bank's financial research institution, told the official Xinhua news agency. But the modest size of the rate increases makes it unclear how effective they will be.

Rates on bank loans will increase only an average 0.82 percentage points so as not to cripple state-owned enterprises, which rely on such loans to operate, Xinhua reported.

Although bank loans have swelled far beyond the state plan,

Xinhua said the government "does not want to apply the brakes on the economy by drastically increasing interest rates."

Under Mr. Deng's reforms, China's economy grew nearly 13 per cent last year and is widely expected to surpass the government target of eight per cent this year.

Many Chinese have been taking their money out of bank savings, where interest rates ranging from just 2.7 per cent to 6.9 per cent have not kept up with

inflation. Those withdrawals can create additional inflationary pressure. Xinhua said residents' bank savings were down 4.48 billion yuan (\$786 million) in March from the previous month.

The central bank said interest rates on total bank deposits will increase by an average 1.19 percentage points, while rates for private and institutional fixed-term bank savings will rise by 2.18 percentage points to an average 9.07 per cent, Xinhua said.

Kenya reintroduces reforms to woo back aid

NAIROBI (R) — Cash-strapped Kenya Friday strengthened its case for the resumption of lifeblood Western aid, reintroducing key economic liberalisation measures it abolished only two months ago.

The reopening of "retention accounts" and the ending of all controls on imports except prohibited goods, were the latest in a series of bold steps to persuade donors that Kenya is serious about economic reform.

Finance Minister Musalia Mudavadi said the accounts, which allow exporters to keep hard currency instead of remitting it to the central bank, were being brought back with effect from Friday, only two months after Kenya scrapped them.

At that time, President Daniel Arap Moi blasted as "unrealistic" conditions demanded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank for restoration of crucial balance of payments aid suspended in 1991 to force him into economic and political reforms.

"As a sovereign state, Kenya will no longer accept any form of economic arm-twisting from any quarter," he said. But Friday it was clear Kenya, once the region's economic engine but now reeling from a cash squeeze and shortages of essentials such as fuel, had abandoned the fight and given in to demands from donors and the IMF.

"The government has decided to reintroduce retention accounts as from May 14 as the economic environment is now conducive to maintenance of a stable interbank exchange rate," Mr. Mudavadi said.

The government has also decided to allow payment of interest

at market-determined rates on the Kenyan shilling-denominated external accounts held with authorised banks in Kenya, Mr. Mudavadi added. No interest was allowed previously.

Under the new measures, individuals will no longer require central bank approval for travel expenses and payment of education fees abroad. Such funds will now be obtained on the open market at existing rates.

"But commercial banks will be required to receive and retain adequate documentation, which will be subject to audit by the central bank," Mr. Mudavadi said.

Commerce Minister Kiruga M'mukindia said in a separate statement all controls on imports had been abolished except for certain imports banned from Kenya, such as wildlife.

All importers can now approach commercial banks for import financing, and the customs authorities for clearance of goods without requiring prior approval from the central bank, he added.

The statements came shortly after a visit by an IMF review team which left without saying whether the crucial \$40 million monthly balance of payments aid suspended 19 months ago would be reinstated.

Last month, the World Bank announced it was resuming aid worth \$170 million to Kenya in form of quick disbursing balance of payments support.

But economic analysts said IMF approval is needed to unlock the door to much bigger sums from reluctant donors concerned about the pace of reform and corruption, the Bank of Kenya's commercial community.

African airlines lost \$490m in 5 years

VICTORIA FALLS, Zimbabwe (Agencies) — African airlines ran up operating losses of \$490 million in the five years to 1991, African Airlines Association (AFRAA) Secretary-General Mohammad Ahmad has said.

He told delegates to the 25th annual assembly of the 34-member association in Victoria Falls that over the same period the total number of passengers carried annually had dropped by some three million.

Mr. Ahmad said African airlines compared unfavourably with the rest of the industry, adding that "for the vast majority of AFRAA member airlines achieving positive financial results will be a difficult task."

Mr. Ahmad, who had earlier blamed the airlines' poor per-

formance on the world recession, African civil wars and political interference, said many were also overstuffed and underproductive. Zimbabwe's Transport Minister Denis Norman told the opening session of the meeting that African airlines risked collapse if they did not cooperate.

He suggested cooperation in sharing capacity, route scheduling, traffic rights, fuel purchases and insurance costs.

He said that apart from the world recession, difficulties faced by the airlines included the high cost of fuel, high insurance rates, increased competition — particularly from Europe — and cuts in subsidies under economic reform programmes.

The AFRAA urged its 34 member airlines to cooperate on

joint ventures and avoid privatising state carriers in a bid for quick money.

"Privatisation should be taken cautiously," said spokesman Lal Sikka of Mauritius. "We have the expertise. All that is needed is total commitment."

Most African airlines are state-owned and forced to operate unprofitable routes. Many are plagued by bureaucratic inefficiency.

In the latest figures available, from 1991, the 27 member airlines at the time recorded a 14 per cent decline in passengers and a three per cent drop in freight traffic compared to 1990.

Eleven of the airlines posted an operating profit totaling \$169 million, while the other 16 lost \$200 million for an overall deficit of

\$31 million.

The association said joint ventures on maintenance, training, insurance, fuel purchases and ticketing could save money.

It also cited instability in airline management, saying 21 managers or chief executives were either dismissed or replaced by their respective governments in the past two years.

Many cash-strapped African countries have problems paying for fuel, foreign maintenance and landing fees in hard currency, the association said.

In some countries, it said, politicians commandeered planes for personal trips, while armed conflicts in others grounded flights or led to aircraft being seized to carry troops or military supplies.

Pakistan's finance chief warns of grim economic performance

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistan's finance minister warned of plummeting foreign reserves, soaring deficits and a falling growth rate, the state-run news agency said Friday.

Finance Minister Farooq Leghari blamed Pakistan's economic woes on deposed prime minister Nawaz Sharif, whose pro-business government was sacked April 18 on charges of corruption and economic mismanagement.

"A review of the accounts of the previous government during the last two years reveals wasteful expenditures on a massive scale," Mr. Leghari was quoted as saying. In an address to the nation late

Thursday, Mr. Leghari sought to prepare Pakistanis for tough economic times, with the release of the budget on June 10.

Economic mismanagement was the main charge against Mr. Sharif by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, when he used his constitutional powers to oust Mr. Sharif.

They mirrored the charges laid against former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, when Mr. Ishaq Khan unceremoniously dismissed her government in 1990.

Mr. Leghari warned that Pakistan's foreign debt would soar to \$18.5 billion, or 7.8 per cent, more than a full percentage point higher than earlier expectations. And the interest on its debt for 1992-93 is expected to reach \$1.5

billion. Mr. Leghari also said Pakistan likely would end 1993 with a growth rate of roughly three per cent, instead of the projected growth rate of six per cent.

Economists blamed the growth rate drop on last September's devastating floods, which crippled Pakistan's cotton industry and its most lucrative export, cotton yarn.

An increase in imports also damaged Pakistan's economic growth rate, officials said. According to the state Bank of Pakistan, foreign reserves drop-

ped from \$1.06 billion on Feb. 25 to \$479 million on May 10.

The dismissal of Mr. Sharif's government was only partly responsible for the drastic drop, said finance ministry officials, who are not identified under usual briefing rules.

In the first five days following Mr. Sharif's ouster, there was a run on the banks and \$120 million was withdrawn, officials said.

The drop in exports caused by the floods and large payments for petroleum imports also contributed to the decline in foreign reserves.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

ECONOMIC NEWS IN BRIEF

European airline loses rise

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — Losses for Europe's biggest airlines deepened last year to around \$1.35 billion from \$1.1 billion in 1991, the 23-member Association of European Airlines (AEA) announced Friday. Losses mounted because of falling ticket prices and high interest charges, the AEA said in a statement. The AEA said stagnant demand hit airlines in Europe and a fierce fares war undercut stronger demand for flights between Europe and North America, said AEA Secretary-General Karl-Heinz Neumeister. The slump in European passenger demand deterred airlines taking full advantage of a relaxation in European Community (EC) rules and new competitive opportunities, said Mr. Neumeister. At the start of 1993 EC airlines were allowed to set up subsidiaries anywhere in the trade bloc and operate between any two community airports. Higher demand in Europe will trigger fierce competition in the heart of the EC when airlines traditionally based on the periphery of the trade bloc start setting up bases in France and Germany, Mr. Neumeister said. "We will see more moves towards the center," he added. British Airways has already moved to compete with Germany and France by founding Deutsche B.A., in which it has a 49 per cent stake, and taking minority stake in French carrier TAT, Mr. Neumeister added.

Uganda to lay off 7,000 civil servants

KAMPALA (AFP) — The Ugandan government is to lay off 7,000 civil servants in the second phase of a World Bank-funded exercise that started in 1991. Permanent secretary and head of civil service Martin Oreh told AFP that the majority of those to be laid off because, he said, of their incompetence, work in the countryside. This is the second phase of the programme under which the country's 270,000 public workforce would be trimmed to less than half. Public Service Minister Sam Sebageraka said last week that the government was to abolish low-grade category of civil servants which constitutes half of the total civil service number. "We are slashing 50,000 of them by next month (June)," the minister said. World Bank officials have said the cutdown will aim at a smaller, better and highly professional civil service to replace the largely corrupt one.

Japan banks estimate \$121b in bad loans

TOKYO (R) — Bad loans held by Japan's leading banks are estimated to total about 13.5 trillion yen (\$121 billion), a financial daily newspaper has reported. The Nihon Keizai Shimbun said Japan's 21 big banks will report the loan totals as part of their earnings results for the year ended March 31. Sakura Bank is expected to report the biggest amount of bad loans at 1.4 trillion yen (\$12.6 billion), followed by Fuji Bank and Sanmito Bank with about 1.3 trillion yen (\$11.7 billion) each, the newspaper said. The three long-term credit banks will each disclose about 600 billion yen (\$5.4 billion), and the seven trust banks will each post some 400 billion yen (\$3.6 billion) to 600 billion yen (\$5.4 billion) in bad loans, it said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY MAY 16, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: This is a good day for deciding about future property matters and you can feel free to discuss your activities in confidence with advisors who are well-experienced in your problem area.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You would be wise to carefully consider any changes you make in the manner in which you do your duties and best operate by getting an expert to advise you.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Seek out ways this day to so organize your pleasure that they cost less than some projected cost, and you save security from being endangered.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You find that if a disturbing factor comes into your home today much trouble can result and instead get your home in perfect running order.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Think about what you can do to have a good time and especially by avoiding some upsetting chores that attract your attention to be done.

LEO: (July 22 August 21) Consider well home affairs and don't let the desire for more pleasure keep you from going along with family members in what they like to do.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You are able to uncover all sorts of data that is of interest to you and especially away from your residence where conditions can be difficult.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You have a good day to consider the various practical matters that face you and require some settlement in the next few days as please them.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You have very good judgment and the chance to get good friends to go along with you as a jaunt or a plan that appeals to you and to them.

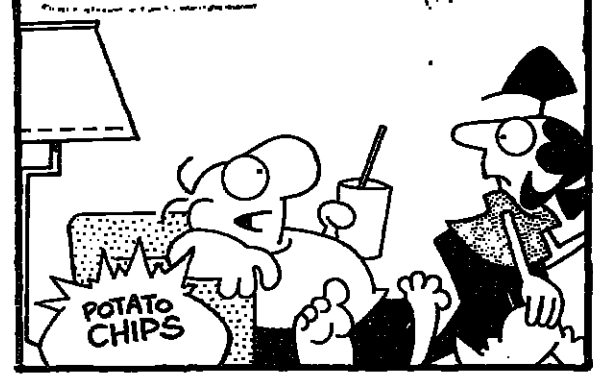
SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Your interest in privately going over some matters vital to your progress with an influential person is fine now as quietly get together.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Going on a trip or jaunt with a good friend may be exactly right for you now and you will get away from fussing over a situation you can't do anything about.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can analyse where you are headed in practical matters and find the right outlet in the world outside for handling such interests now.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) A new standpoint towards a determined partner can help you to get along better with this difficult person so be cooperative and advanced methods.

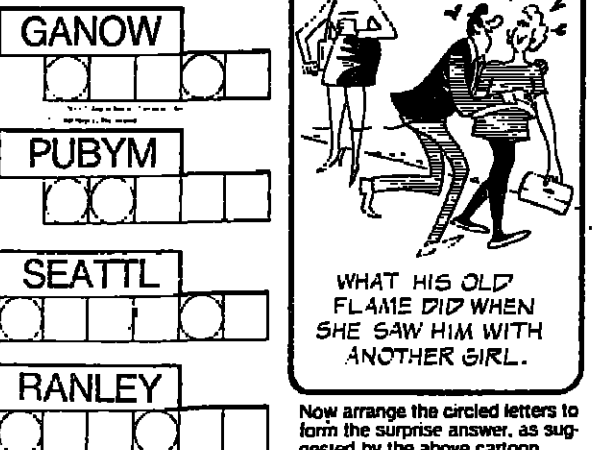
THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"I gave blood today. I better avoid housework for a few weeks so I don't pass out."

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Hern Arnold

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

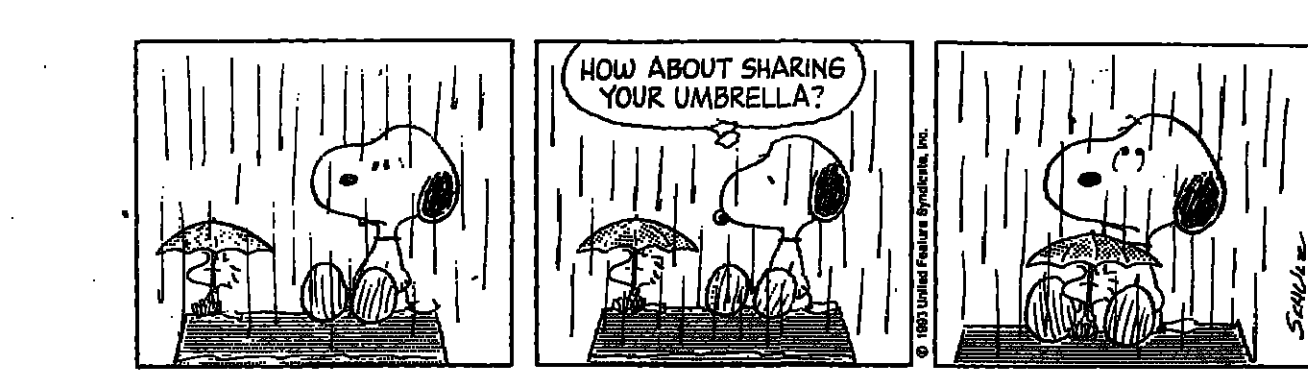


Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: A

Jumbles: LINGO UNWED HERMIT GRAYON
Answer: It's usual to have this before dinner—LUNCH

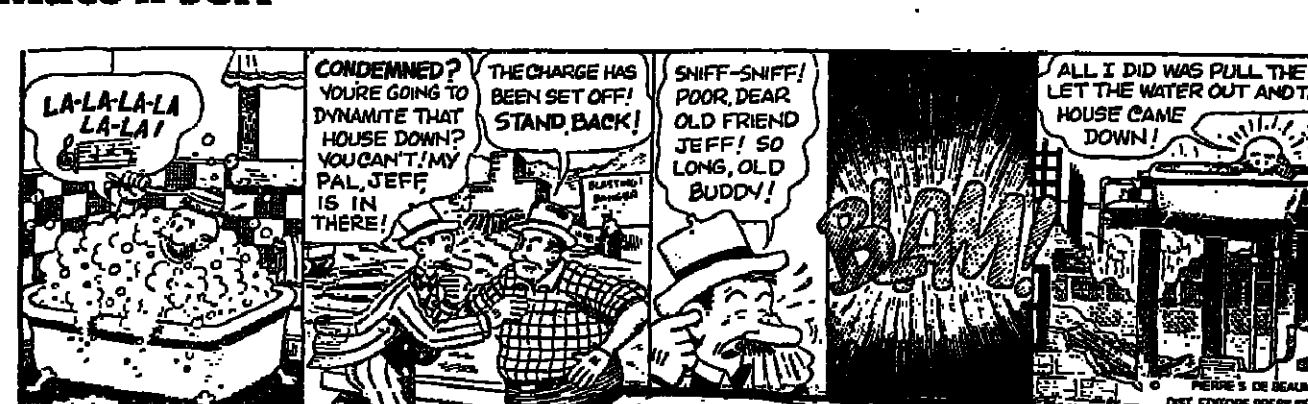
Peanuts



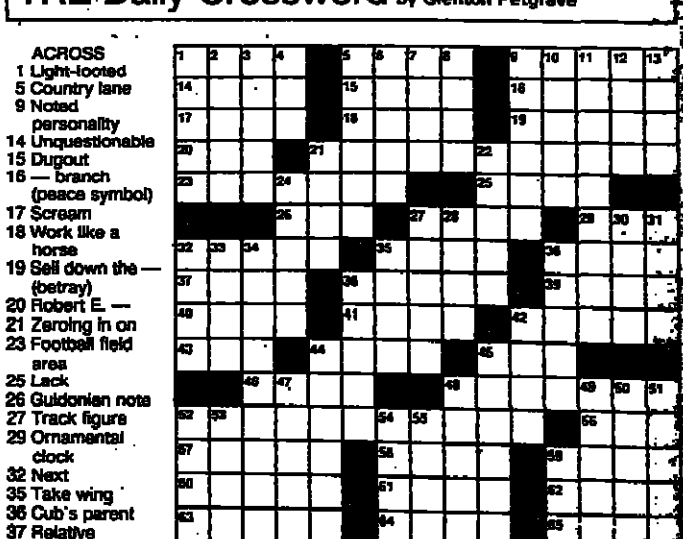
Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword by Glenon Petgrave



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:
ORAL SANAB APPEL
BAND LOVE GAVE
BUILT BUILT BUILT
SEAL BRADIAN
OVER DASTIN
HAMPER COPE
ASCOY FODA DEE
SHIPPOREDEDEDE
HEX HIAN ARRIE
ESTER ARRIE
SHEEPBARK HIAN
SOAR HIAN HIAN
BEEB ARRIE DEE
SEED REEE REE

Attacker gets 40 years in 'condom rape' trial

AUSTIN, Texas (R) — A jury sentenced a knife-wielding attacker to 40 years in prison in the "condom rape" case in which the defence contended the victim had consented to sex by asking the man to use a condom. The eight-woman, four-man jury deliberated for five hours before imposing the sentence on 28-year-old Joel Rene Valdez, who was convicted of rape Thursday. Mr. Valdez will have to serve a mandatory 10 years. The victim, 26-year-old Elizabeth Xan Wilson, thanked the jury after the sentencing. "I have been called the victim in the condom rape case," she said. "I do not have a victim's mentality." Ms. Wilson, an artist, told reporters after the conviction that she wanted to "humanise" herself by revealing her name and agreed to comment at the end of the trial. The jury had a wide range of options, from five years probation to 99 years in prison.

The first brother bites the Big Apple — ouch

NEW YORK (AP) — There he is on stage, doing a bad version of a great song. There he is in Bloomingdale's department store, shouting at a photographer. Roger Clinton, the 37-year-old brother of President Bill Clinton, had a full week while visiting New York City. "He's a little upset," his manager, Butch Stone, said, when the New York Post's front page screamed, "Ragin' Roger — 1st bro wrings fan's neck at Knicks game." The week began with great promise for the aspiring recording artist: Roger performed Tuesday night with his band Politics to a full house at the Palace, a Manhattan night club. Then the reviews rolled in. "His voice, at this point, is not particularly powerful or distinctive," wrote Daily News critic David Hinckley, who didn't care much for the Clinton-covers of Wilson Pickett's rhythm-and-blues classic Mustang Sally. "Mop-topped Roger was OK. ... everyone expected him to make a fool of himself. ... he didn't," said Dan Aquilante of the New York Post, damning the singer with the faintest of praise. Call the reviews an omen. Roger would have been better off heading directly to the airport after the gig. Alas, Roger stayed. Wednesday morning's tabloids carried reports of his run-in with a New York Post photographer while shopping in Bloomingdale's. When the shutterbug tried to snap Mr. Clinton, he jumped behind a rack of designer ties and shouted for security.

Robert F. Kennedy remembered

WASHINGTON (AP) — After a quarter century, the memories of Robert Francis Kennedy flooded back Friday. Those who knew him, and some who did not, said his life gave luster to the often tarnished profession of politician. "Robert Kennedy would like to be thought of in many ways as a practical politician," said Sen. Christopher Dodd. "He was proud of the name politician, because he knew a politician could dream, but also achieve much." Sen. Dodd, who was a Peace Corps volunteer on June 6, 1968, recalled a hand gently shaking him from sleep on the floor of a peasant hut in the mountains of the Dominican Republic. "A Spanish voice saying simply, 'se murio' — 'he died.' The word had come from California that Kennedy, a candidate for president in the footsteps of his brother had, like John Kennedy, been killed by an assassin. As she has done so many times in the last 24 years, Ethel Kennedy, the senator's widow, listened to friends, colleagues and other family members pay tribute to her husband who was shot dead moments after claiming victory in the California state presidential primary election. "Across the years, his memory is still vivid," said Sen. Edward Kennedy, youngest of the brothers, his voice hoarse and nearly breaking. "The ripples of his life reach out to future generations, to all who share the ideal we heard so often in the campaign 25 years ago: 'some men see things as they are and ask why — I dream things that never were and say why not?'"

Kurosawa to make 3 more films

CANNES (R) — Akira Kurosawa, the 83-year-old Japanese director, came to present his 30th feature, Madadayo, showing out of competition. "I want to make at least three more films," he told reporters, displaying no sign of frailty. The secret of his longevity? "I do what I want. I live very naturally. If I want to smoke, I smoke. If I want to drink, I drink. That's the best way." Kurosawa is not the only octogenarian director in Cannes. French master Marcel Carne, who is 84, hopes to finish his latest project Mouchette after a year-long delay caused by financing problems.

U.N. reports new outbreaks of Bosnia fighting

SARAJEVO (R) — Heavy fighting erupted again in two key Bosnian troublespots Saturday, a United Nations military spokesman said.

Commander Barry Frewer told reporters Bosnian Serbs had launched an assault near the strategic northern Bosnian town of Brcko, where they are facing Croat and Muslim units.

Bosnian Croat soldiers using mortars, artillery and multiple rocket launchers had attacked Muslim units in the southwestern city of Mostar, where fighting between the two former allies has raged for the past week, he said.

The attacks on Mostar came despite two ceasefire agreements during the past week. An estimated 2,000 Muslims are being detained by Croat forces near the city. About 50 of the civilians were released Friday, but there was no immediate confirmation of a Croatian radio report that the rest would be freed Saturday.

A Spanish U.N. peacekeeping soldier was slightly wounded Saturday by a mine near a bridge not far from Mostar that was blown up Thursday.

A Spanish officer who was seriously wounded near Mostar died in a Madrid hospital last week.

Sarajevo Radio said rain was helping to put out fires in Mostar caused by the fighting. The U.N. said it sent a humanitarian aid convoy into the city Friday evening.

Maj. Frewer said Bosnian Serb forces were using tanks and heavy artillery in the area around Brcko, where U.N. military observers had seen battalion-size troop movements.

The observers were checking reports from the Muslim-led Bosnian army which claimed that the Serbs were attacking with helicopters firing rockets.

"There was heavy fighting all night and it is increasing today," Maj. Frewer said.

Muslim-controlled Sarajevo Radio said the Serbs had deployed 32 tanks in their offensive in the Brcko area and Muslim forces had destroyed five of them.

Brcko is on the Bosnian bank of the Sava River border with Croatia. It had a mixed prewar population of 90,000, mainly Muslim.

The city is of great strategic importance to the Serbs since it commands the narrowest part of a key supply route linking Serb territories in eastern and Western Bosnia.

Meanwhile Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said Saturday he would ask former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to

draw up a new peace plan for Bosnia if Serbs vote against the existing plan in their referendum.

The two-day Bosnian Serb plebiscite is expected to reject the peace plan drawn up by mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen.

"If Vance-Owen Mark One is dead, let us move to Vance-Owen Mark Two," Mr. Karadzic said, adding that he would ask Mr. Gorbachev to work out a new plan. "If the West wants success, they have to take the will of the Serbian people into consideration."

A duty officer at the Gorbachev Foundation, a Moscow think-tank set up by the former Soviet leader, said: "We haven't heard anything at all about this."

Mr. Karadzic, who entered the polling station in the Serb headquarters of Pale outside Sarajevo escorted by armed bodyguards, refused to disclose how he had voted.

"This is a secret vote," he told reporters.

Reporters saw his wife Ljiljana vote against the peace plan and in favour of a second question asking whether Bosnian Serbs wanted their own state with the right to unite with other peoples and nations.

The two-day referendum went ahead despite pressure on the Bosnian Serbs from leaders in Belgrade, who urged acceptance of the Vance-Owen plan.

Asked about pressure from the West and from Belgrade, Mr. Karadzic said: "We feel under pressure but we must act as if we are not. We have to make a crucial decision without taking into consideration any pressure."

Voters in Pale were defiant after a five-day "campaign" on Bosnian Serb radio and television urging rejection.

"Remember the old saying," said 63-year-old pensioner Novo Lopatic. "Better a grave than a slave."

"We do want peace but we don't want to divide what is ours and give it to someone else," Bosnian Serbs oppose the Vance-Owen plan, which redraws the map of Bosnia along ethnic lines, because it would force them to give up about one third of the territory they now control.

Early turnout, in Pale at least, appeared brisk. In the Hotel Panorama electoral officials said nearly 60 people had voted in the first 15 minutes.

The hotel, where the polling station is sited, houses many Serb refugees from Sarajevo.

U.S. President Bill Clinton says his threat of military force to halt the war in the former Yugoslavia "is still on the table" despite opposition from European allies.

Police probe mystery Rome car bomb blast

ROME (R) — Italian authorities stepped up security at airports and embassies Saturday as investigators probed a car bomb which rocked a wealthy Roman neighbourhood, injuring more than 20 people.

Italy's police chief said the attack could be the work of the mafia and experts fear it may mark the start of an attempt by Sicilian organised crime to undermine the state through a terror campaign on the Italian mainland.

"They (the bombers) wanted to strike in the midst of the crowd in an area where decent people live. It was a provocative attack which aimed to spread panic," National Police Chief Vincenzo Parisi said.

The bomb severely damaged a building, wrecked about 50 cars and blew out hundreds of windows in the smart Parioli residential district.

Police said 21 people were injured by flying glass and debris in the blast. State radio reported

that an elderly man risked losing sight in one eye.

The blast came 12 hours after Prime Minister Carlos Azeglio Ciampi said the mafia must be defeated and Interior Minister Nicola Mancino warned that the crime group, which has kept a low profile in recent months, might be preparing new attacks.

"This is a coincidence which makes us think. It comes when the government, the magistrates, the forces of order have a record of great successes against organised crime, the mafia," Mr. Parisi said, adding it was not certain who left the bomb.

Some reports said Maurizio Costanzo, a talk-show host who has often taken a strong line against the mafia, could have been the intended victim.

Mr. Costanzo was driving away from the Parioli Theatre, where he had recorded his show, when the bomb went off. The windows in his car were blown out but he escaped injury.

French crack police kill gunman, save hostages

NEUILLY, France (R) — French crack-police broke into a classroom where a gunman had held six infants and their teacher hostage for 46 hours, killing the man and freeing the hostages, the Interior Ministry said Saturday.

"The nightmare is over," Interior Minister Charles Pasqua told reporters outside the school in the plush western Paris suburb of Neuilly where the drama took place.

"The madman has been killed," he said.

The six infants, aged three and four, and their teacher were all safe and sound, Mr. Pasqua said.

An Interior Ministry statement said raid crack police took advantage of the fact the gunman had dozed off and entered the classroom where he was holed up with his hostages at 7:25 a.m. (0525 GMT).

"The man woke up, the raid police opened fire to ensure the safety of the hostages. The man was killed outright," the statement said.

It said the gunman had 16 sticks of dynamite in a belt around his body and there were another five sticks in the classroom. It said the explosives were "operational."

Mr. Pasqua immediately informed Prime Minister Edouard Balladur and President Francois Mitterrand of the "complete success of this operation," the statement said.

Mr. Balladur, barely six weeks into his job, arrived at the scene shortly after the police intervention.

The gunman had seized 21 toddlers and their teacher, Laurence Dreyfus, Thursday morning and demanded a 100 million franc (\$18 million) ransom and a guaranteed getaway.

He had released 15 of the children Thursday.

The hooded gunman had vowed he would not be captured alive and had threatened to bleed his young captives to death.

Anguished parents had kept a desperate vigil in a nearby room in the Commandant Charcot School.

Reporters saw at least three of the children being carried away from the school building by crack police soon after the intervention.

"Believe me, the children are less traumatised than we are," said Nicolas Sarkozy, budget minister and mayor of Neuilly.

Mr. Sarkozy, at the scene of the drama almost continuously since it started, directed negotiations with the gunman, who was in early 30s, wore a hood and was dressed in black.

"He (Sarkozy) displayed a great deal of courage and intelligence in a very hard task," Mr. Pasqua said.

That view was shared by residents of Neuilly, a plush suburb near the Bois De Boulogne Park, who clustered near the school after the drama ended. They praised and clapped their mayor.

Mr. Pasqua, who said the children were all in good health, was also full of praise for the teacher who managed to stay cool during a nerve-wracking drama, saying her role had been crucial.

"I would like to express my admiration and that of the government for the teacher. She played a decisive part in this affair in very difficult circumstances," Mr. Pasqua said.

Ms. Dreyfus, 30 and the mother of a 20-month-old child herself, did her best to keep the children happy and make them feel safe during long hours holed up in the classroom.

With only one year's teaching experience, she initially pretended the whole thing was a game, telling the children the man had a gun to kill wolves.

Interior Ministry officials said just before the police intervention that authorities had paid the gunman a "good part" of the ransom he demanded.

The ministry said in a statement that negotiations with him had been called off at his request after midnight "although his conditions have been met."

Playing a game of patience and hoping to break the man through exhaustion, the authorities stressed throughout that they would not risk harming the children.

The toddlers and their teacher were brought food and drink during their two days' captivity, as well as sleeping bags and duvets.

In an unconfirmed report, Le Parisien newspaper said Saturday that authorities had given the man 15 million francs (\$2.7 million) Thursday and then added more money Friday to make a total of 52 million francs (\$9 million).

But the newspaper said negotiations were stalled on the man's demands for his getaway. He wanted to take the children with him as a human shield and to be filmed on television, apparently to avoid any possibility of being shot at.

Lamont wins faint praise at Conservative gathering

EDINBURGH (R) — Britain's embattled chancellor, Norman Lamont, won only faint praise during a conference of his ruling Conservative Party this week, fuelling speculation that he may be dropped in a cabinet reshuffle this summer.

Prime Minister John Major and other ministers gave little credit to the accident-prone chancellor of the exchequer, who as steward of the country's finances has come under enormous pressure during a two-year recession.

Mr. Lamont made a spirited plea for his job during the conference, saying: "The government should be judged on its record, and I rather hope I shall be judged on mine."

Mr. Major is under pressure to revitalise his cabinet after a slump in support brought big losses in local elections last week as well as defeat in a by-election that cut his majority to just 19 in the 651-seat House of Commons. It was subsequently reduced to 18 by the death of a Conservative member.

The prime minister associated Mr. Lamont with painful but, he argued, necessary tight monetary policies which were imposed to squeeze out inflation but which, he conceded, had "led to bankruptcies and home repossession."

He said the fight against inflation had been a huge responsibility and challenge. "It took determination. It took skill. It took guts. And Norman Lamont has shown he has all three."

Although the prime minister went on to discuss the hopeful prospects for recovery, he did not link Mr. Lamont with that.

On Tuesday, in an exchange in the House of Commons, Mr. Major also declined to offer Mr. Lamont unequivocal backing.

Asked three times whether Mr. Lamont would present the next government budget, he avoided a direct reply, saying: "I have not yet even begun to contemplate cabinet changes."

Party Chairman Norman Fowler, opening the conference in Edinburgh Wednesday, was lukewarm towards the chancellor. He firmly pinned credit for taming inflation on Mr. Major, offering only brief praise for Mr. Lamont. "May I add that Norman Lamont deserves a lot of credit for that," he said.

The 51-year-old chancellor insisted his policies had been effective. "The whole economy has been growing for the last three quarters. The recession is over."



French tactical police hold last freed children in front of the nursery school early Saturday after a marksman killed the hostage-taker (AFP photo)

Head of Hearst newspaper empire dies

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — William Randolph Hearst Jr., who headed one of America's biggest and most powerful newspaper empires built up by his domineering father, has died aged 85, an editor at one of the Hearst newspapers said.

George Raine, an editor on the San Francisco Examiner, said Mr. Hearst died in New York City Friday night of natural causes. It was not immediately known whether he died at home or in a hospital.

Mr. Hearst was editor-in-chief of Hearst newspapers, one of America's biggest newspaper empires, and chairman of the executive committee of the Hearst Corp.

He inherited the publishing empire built by his father, William Randolph Hearst Sr., the controversial newspaper magnate who was the model for Orson Welles' film classic Citizen Kane.

For more than 40 years, Hearst Jr. wrote a column for the San Francisco Examiner, the flagship paper of the group. Mr. Hearst

the second of five sons, once said he had lived in his father's shadow all his life. But he was always strongly loyal to his father and said he worshipped him for his ability as a journalist. Mr. Hearst Sr. the son of a millionaire, built a coast-to-coast newspaper empire that gave him vast power to set the nation's agenda.

Critics accused Mr. Hearst Sr. of creating "yellow," or sensationalised journalism, but his son said his father had created the modern-day newspaper, opening the way to muck-racking journalism that exposed society's ills and gave journalists a new respect in society.

Mr. Hearst Jr. said his proudest moment was leading a team of three journalists to Moscow to become the first to interview the post-Stalin Soviet leadership.

Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev chose Mr. Hearst to tell the world the Soviet Union wanted "peaceful co-existence." For the interview, Mr. Hearst and his team were awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1956 for international reporting.

During his life, Mr. Hearst moved among the famous but was never as powerful as his domineering father.

He was a close friend of Howard Hughes, and bore a grudge against writer Ernest Hemingway who he said once knocked him to the ground when they were drinking at a bar outside Paris in the last days of World War II.

In a memoir written two years before his death, The Hearsts: Father And Son, Mr. Hearst Jr. gave an insight into his life and his father's last years.

He said that out of loyalty to his father he never saw Citizen Kane which portrayed the senior Hearst as a cold, arrogant reclusive surrounded by meaningless possessions and toadies.

"Orson Welles didn't know him at all," Mr. Hearst said in the memoir, written with Jack Casserty. He also said that the Hearst empire has been wrong to close so many newspapers. The empire, which at one point had 32 papers, has 12 today.

South African mine toll reaches 53

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Rescue workers Saturday found the last of the 53 coal miners killed in a gas explosion which has helped reinforce a trade union campaign for safety in South African mines.

Jan Krynauw, spokesman for Seol Ltd., said specialist rescue teams found the last of the bodies in the early hours, about 36 hours after the methane blast in the company's Middelburg mine in Secunda, 120 kilometres east of Johannesburg.

Since the explosion Thursday afternoon, the unions have repeatedly accused the owners of South Africa's mines of showing more interest in profit than in safety.

The Congress of South African

Trade Unions said the explosion and another mine accident Thursday were a national disaster underlining the need for "drastic action to end the carnage in our mining industry."

"The industry continues to be characterised by the search for profits at all costs. Mining in South Africa is probably the most dangerous in the world because of the failure to make safety measures adequate to the difficult conditions under which we mine," it said in a statement.

In the other accident Thursday, five men were killed by a rock fall 2,200 metres underground in a gold mine near Orkney, west of Johannesburg.

Kate Philip, acting general

secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), said low wages on mines meant South African mine owners could afford to sink shafts deeper than anywhere else in the world.

"Mine depth is directly related to safety. The deeper 'you go, the hotter it gets and the greater the danger of rock bursts," she told Reuters.

South Africa has the deepest gold mines in the world.

More than 220 people have now been killed and 2,000 injured in South African mines so far this year, Ms. Philip said.

She said the NUM was pressing for managers to give workers more discretion in taking decisions about safety.

Pretoria's Conservatives elect new leader

PRETORIA (R) — The right-wing white Conservative Party in South Africa unanimously elected hardliner Ferdi Hartzenberg as its new leader Saturday.

Mr. Hartzenberg, who was unopposed, replaces Andries Treurnicht, who died of heart failure last month.

At a special congress in Pretoria about 600 members of the party gave Mr. Hartzenberg a series of standing ovations as he promised in his acceptance speech to fight for Afrikaner self-determination.

The Conservative Party, which Mr. Hartzenberg and Mr. Treurnicht formed 11 years ago when they split from the ruling National Party, is taking part in negotiations with the government, the African National Congress and other groups on a new constitution.

Mr. Hartzenberg said the party would not compromise on its demand for self-determination for the Afrikaners, the descen-

dants of Dutch settlers in South Africa.

"Our nation is prepared to sacrifice all its worldly goods for freedom," he said. "We are even prepared to offer up our blood... without self-determination there can be no peace."

Mr. Hartzenberg said President F.W. de Klerk might be willing to serve under ANC leader Nelson Mandela, but no one in the Conservative Party was.

The party is the biggest of the right-wing groups that agreed earlier this month to form a front coordinated by four former generals.

The front intends to unite the white right to give its demands more weight in the transition to non-racial rule.

The ANC said Friday it would try to negotiate directly with the front. The main issue separating them is the degree of autonomy which regions would have under a new constitution.

Meanwhile South Africa's largest black political organisation the African National Congress (ANC) Saturday called for 10 years compulsory schooling for all races in the new South Africa.

Addressing a conference at the University of the Witwatersrand here on the crisis in black education, ANC Secretary-General Cyril Ramaphosa said a new, integrated education system "has to make provision for at least 10 years of free, compulsory education for all the children of our country."

He also said a future industrial relations policy must "afford teachers the respect, dignity and professional status they so richly deserve."

"Until we are in a position to implement education policies based on these and similar points of departure, our education system will continue to be plagued by crisis after crisis," he said.

Clinton expected to order resumption of nuclear tests

NEW YORK (R) — President Bill Clinton is expected to approve a plan which would allow underground nuclear testing to resume after a moratorium imposed by Congress expired on July 1, the New York Times reported in Saturday editions.

Citing unnamed administration officials, the New York Times said Mr. Clinton was expected to express his intention to call a final halt to testing in 1996. The resumption of testing would take place by the end of the year, the newspaper said.

The congressional moratorium also bans any tests to develop new weapons, but stipulates that testing existing weapons could resume after July 1 once the president submits a proposal for a comprehensive test ban to go into effect by 1996.

According to the report, representatives of the Departments of

State, Energy and Defence have endorsed renewed testing, although the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency warned that Russia and France, which have agreed to halt testing as long as the United States does, would then be likely to resume weapons testing as well.

The Pentagon and other national security agencies have urged that nuclear testing be resumed, saying it was vital to the safety and reliability of the country's nuclear stockpile.

Officials said it was unlikely that Mr. Clinton would overrule the recommendations of those agencies, the New York Times said. The principal members of the National Security Council met Friday to review the issue but reached no formal decisions.

The officials said it could be a week or more before Mr. Clinton announced his decision on the

resumption of testing.

Congress, following similar moves by Russia and France, imposed a nine-month moratorium on testing last year.

Meanwhile, President Clinton, testily rejecting criticism of his leadership at home and abroad, said Friday he will carry on as he has despite plunging polls and "let the chips fall where they may."

Mr. Clinton challenged many of the criticisms of the first months of his presidency, from insisting his youthful aides have no decision-making roles to saying he had to make controversial changes because of the neglect of his Republican predecessors.

During a wide-ranging news conference in the sun-drenched Rose Garden, he fended off the fault-finders, saying: "The easy path is cynicism, the easy path is to throw rocks. The better path is

doing the hard work of change."

Mr. Clinton said his low standing in public opinion polls — a record for a president in office less than four months — was caused not by his own failings but by his desire to tackle and eliminate longstanding national problems.

"I'm doing things that are hard, that are controversial, and anybody who doesn't want to assume responsibility can stand on the sidelines and criticise them," he said.

"I never expected that I could actually do anything about the deficit without having some hits," he said.

A new poll by the Gallup Organisation for Cable News Network and USA Today found just 45 per cent of Americans approve of the way Mr. Clinton is handling his job, while 44 per cent disapprove. Eleven per cent had no opinion.

The previous low for a new president was 50 per cent, held by Gerald Ford, who angered Americans with his pardon of Richard Nixon for any Watergate-era crimes.

"If things are better at the end of the period that I was given to serve, then the poll ratings now won't make any difference, and if they're not they won't make any difference," he said philosophically.

"So my job is to do my job and let the chips fall where they may," Mr. Clinton said.

Mr. Clinton's leading critic, Senate Republican leader Robert Dole, said low standing in opinion polls make it more difficult for a president to get his way in Congress.

"He's got time on his side, but it's not a good indicator," Sen. Dole told CNN. "It's an indication that the American people,

not Republicans...have tuned in and they don't like what they see."

The 40-minute exchange ended with Mr. Clinton being asked if he felt he was "tough enough to tackle all the problems" — prompting him to sternly vent his frustrations and defend his presidency.

"I think we're getting good results," Mr. Clinton told reporters. "We've been here three months, we've passed a number of important bills, and I feel good about it."

He defended his oft-changing policies in Bosnia by saying, "I have gotten more done on this than my predecessor did, and maybe one reason he didn't try to do it is because if you can't force everybody to fall in line overnight...you may be accused of vacillating."

"We are not vacillating" on

Magic says 3-on-3 game is great idea

HELSINKI (AP) — There's the highly successful seniors golf tour, baseball failed, but the tennis and bowling graybeards still play for big money.

How about one for the basketball geezers?

"Why not?" says Alex English, the 1983 NBA scoring champion who's on a tour with an NBA veteran All Star team led by Magic Johnson in Europe this week.

"One of the things we're trying to develop along with the retired players modeled after the 3-on-3 that we have in America now on the Amateur level."

Johnson, 34, who came back after a 7-month layoff to score 28 points for the NBA vets in a 119-117 win over YMCA Helsinki in Finland last weekend, loves the idea.

But Johnson, who decided against an NBA comeback with the Los Angeles last fall, a year after announcing he had the AIDS virus, is not sure he'll take part in the pro 3-on-3 game.

"Some of them would probably enjoy playing too, especially if there's a possibility of being able to earn a \$100,000," he said.

Centre Moses Malone, another veteran on the Milwaukee Bucks, thinks it's a new challenge.

Other players are sceptical, however.

Says Michael Cooper, Johnson's former teammate who now works in the Lakers' front office:

"It would be slow-motion. Basketball is a high-tempo type of game. It's not any fun watching Moses Malone walk up and down the floor while (Bob) Beardo



Magic Johnson of the U.S. All-star team in action at an exhibition match in Belgium Friday (AFP photo)

stands under there for rebounds and trying to shoot a 2-foot jumper."

"You want to see the guys you grew up with, but on the other hand I agree with Michael that it's also kind of disenchanted to see some of your superstars not able to dunk anymore or do the

same things they did when they were younger. Personally, I probably wouldn't be involved in that," says NBA veteran Marques Johnson.

But on English, Malone and Rambis if the 3-on-3 game ever takes off. And maybe Magic.

American boxers in trouble

TAMPERE, Finland (AP) — American amateur boxing is still in trouble.

Only three out of 11 Americans made the semifinals in the World Amateur Boxing Championships.

Two of them have to make the finals — and win their gold medal bouts as well — if the United States is to avoid another debacle in major world competition in less than a year.

In the Barcelona Olympics, the U.S. team got one gold (lightweight Oscar De La Hoya), a silver (middleweight Chris Byrd) and a bronze (flyweight Tim Austin) for its worst medal haul since the 1956 games.

However, the only American with a chance at the world title seems to be lightweight Larry Nicholson who advanced to the gold-medal bout with an impressive decision Friday over Vasile Nistor of Romania in the World Amateur Boxing Championships.

Nicholson, an American Championship rookie at age 26 who fought in the shadow of Oscar De La Hoya until the 1992 Olympic champ turned pro, won the semifinal 14-2 after leading all the way.

The powerful Cuban team, which dominated the Olympic tournament in Barcelona last year, had 11 boxers in the semis.

Five of them boxed during the first semifinal session — featuring six weight classes — and all advanced to the finals.

Olympic champion Felix Savon stopped France's Stephane Allouane with a right cross in the second round of their heavyweight semifinal.

Savon, 25, a triple world champion who hasn't lost a single tournament since coming up from the juniors, will fight Georgi Kandelaki of Georgia in the final. Kandelaki outpointed Arshak Avartakian of Armenia 7-2 in the other semifinal bout.

In the final, Nicholson faces Cuba's Damian Austin who had a walkover against the injured Tibor Rafael of Slovakia.

Nashan Munchian of Armenia beat another American semifinalist, Alberto Guadalupe, in the light-flyweight division.

Munchian, 29, has only lost 15 of 235 bouts and won the 1987 European Championships, competing for the former Soviet Union. He was a bronze medalist in both the 1989 European and World Championships.

In the final, Munchian will meet Daniel Petrov of Bulgaria, who outpointed Erdenet-Sogt Tsogtjargal of Mongolia 6-2.

Italian Open Sampras, Courier roll into semifinals

ROME (AP) — The power hitters are taking over for the clay-court diggers at the Italian Open.

Pete Sampras, Jim Courier and Goran Ivanisevic posted straight-set victories Friday over prototype clay-court specialists to reach the semifinals.

The other semifinal berth was filled by Michael Chang, who saved two match points in the third set and defeated Andrei Chesnokov 6-3, 5-7, 7-5 in a marathon lasting three hours, 38 minutes, and ending just before midnight.

Sampras, the No. 1 seed and world's top-ranked player, crushed Guillermo Perez-Roldan of Argentina 6-0, 6-2 in one hour in a match interrupted twice by rain.

Courier, the defending champion and No. 2 seed, rolled past seventh-seeded Sergi Bruguera of Spain 6-3, 6-4. Ivanisevic, the No. 4 seed, downed Marcelo Filippini of Uruguay 7-6 (7-4), 6-4.

In the semifinals, Sampras will play Ivanisevic and Courier will face Chang. It's first time in the tournament's 50-year history that three Americans have reached the semifinals.

The Chang-Chesnokov encounter was the longest three-set match of the year and just nine minutes short of the longest five-set match.

The sixth-seeded Chang was down 3-5 in the final set, with two match points against him at 15-40. But the Russian squandered the first chance with a forehand error and Chang erased the second with an overhead.

Perez-Roldan was a finalist here in 1988, but he never had a chance against Sampras. The American scored repeatedly with his big serve, recording six aces and nine service winners. He also outplayed the Argentine from the baseline, hitting winners from both sides and making 10 fewer unforced errors.

Things are working out, too, for Courier. Playing his first clay-court tournament of the year, he looked right at home as he punished Bruguera with a sharp display of attacking tennis.

Bruguera, who had reached the final of his last three tournaments, could not keep up with Courier's relentless pace. The American tied off freely on his groundstrokes and moved to his frequently on short balls for put-away volleys.

Courier appears to be peaking for the French Open, the Grand



Former No. 1 Jim Courier returns a double-fisted backhand to his opponent (AFP photo)

Slam tournament beginning in Paris May 24. He has won the French the past two years.

"It's hard for me to remember how I was playing last year at this time," Courier said. "But after today I feel particularly good about the state of my game."

The same sentiment was expressed by Ivanisevic, who reached the semifinals of a tournament for the first time this year.

Ivanisevic's main weapon is his serve, which was clocked at up to 114 mph. He recorded only three aces against Filippini, but he won 30 of the 34 points in which he got in his first serve.

German arrested with knives at Italian Open: A German man carrying several knives was arrested at the Italian Open Friday, police said. The incident came two weeks after Monica Seles was stabbed during a tournament in Hamburg, Germany.

Uebels, 46, was stopped by police inside the grounds of the Foro Italico Tennis Complex. Police searched his handbag and found several knives and a revolver with blanks, Italian news agencies said.

The man, who appeared to be disturbed, claimed he was James

Bond, the reports said.

Police searched the pension where the man was staying and found more knives, a woman's wig, a toy gun and photos of tennis players Boris Becker and Gabriela Sabatini.

Graf, Fernandez to meet in German Open semifinal: In Berlin, top-seeded Steffi Graf and third-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez posted straight-set victories Friday to set up a semifinal clash at the German Open women's tennis tournament.

Gabriela Sabatini, the No. 2 seed from Argentina, also reached the semifinals by ousting 11th-seeded Anke Huber of Germany, 7-6, 6-1, after trailing in the first set.

Sabatini's opponent will be fifth-seeded Conchita Martinez, in a rematch of last week's final of the Italian Open in Rome which the Spaniard won 7-5, 6-1.

Martinez routed Brenda Schultz of the Netherlands, 6-1, 6-0. The hard-serving Dutchwoman wasn't able to duplicate the display of power tennis she used Thursday in upsetting fourth-seeded American Jennifer Capriati.

Graf bounced back from Wednesday's first-set humiliation at the hands of fellow German Sabine Hack, breezing past sixth-seeded Magdalena Maleeva of

Bulgaria 6-2, 6-3 in just 63 minutes.

Fernandez was equally impressive in beating eighth-seeded Nathalie Tauziat of France, 6-3, 6-2.

Masur upsets McEnroe: In Coral Springs, Florida, Wally Masur ended Patrick McEnroe's bid for his first title with a 6-3, 6-2 victory in a quarterfinal match in the America's Red Clay Championship Tournament Friday.

Masur, the top seed, is hoping to end a two-year title drought of his own. The Australian's last tour victory came at Hong Kong in April 1991.

"I won a tournament at 19 and thought it was easy," said Masur, whose current world ranking of 24th is a career best. "Over the years I've recognized how hard it is to win a tournament."

Masur, who turned 30 Thursday, will play third-seeded Todd Martin in one of the semifinals.

The hard-serving Martin beat Bryan Shelton 6-3, 6-4.

Second-seeded David Wheaton came from behind to defeat fellow Stanford product Alex O'Brien 4-6, 6-4, 6-0 and will play unseeded Aaron Krickstein in the other semifinal.

On the comeback trail after foot surgery last year, rallied past Swedish qualifier Mikael Pernfors 2-6, 6-1, 6-2.

ITTF bans all bat glue

GOTHENBURG (R) — Table tennis chiefs Friday banned all glue used to stick rubbers to bats in a move to protect the sport's clean image.

International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) President Ichiro Ogimura of Japan said the ban would take effect from Sept. 1.

"We want to protect our players' health and we also want to protect our sport's image so that it can be recommended as a healthy pursuit," he said.

Ogimura said the ITTF's equipment committee had recommended that a double-sided adhesive sheet or a pre-coated rubber should be used instead of glue.

Delegates at the ITTF council meeting in Gothenburg voted 25-4 with six abstentions in favour of the ban.

The ITTF had been concerned about the use of glues, including toxic substances which are a health hazard because of the fumes.

Ogimura said manufacturers had been informed by the equipment committee of 19 approved brands of glue that could be used until the end of August.

The ITTF decided in January to outlaw "glueing-up" within 24 hours of a match after medical tests showed that exposure to the fumes during matches endangered players' health.

Glueing-up is the practice of using soft glue to restick rubbers to bats about 30 minutes before matches to increase the speed of serves.

Ogimura said tests had shown there was a four per cent difference in serving speed between bats using the banned and approved adhesives.

Random tests are being made during the world championships which started in Gothenburg Tuesday to detect glues containing aromatic or chlorinated solvents.

During pre-tournament testing carried out to let players know if adhesives met requirements, Ogimura said 200 bats were submitted and there were no positive tests.

If an illegal glue is detected during random testing before a match, the bat must be replaced but the player will not be banned. Competitors risk disqualification if there is a positive test after a match.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HIRSH
Touma Media Services Inc.

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠A108752 ♠AKJ3 ♣7 ♠65
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
?

What do you bid now?

A.—Partner's no-trump response does not promise even a singleton spade, whereas the responding hand could easily contain a four-card or longer heart suit. To rebid two spades risks going down in partial in that suit when you might have a game in hearts. Bid two hearts.

Q.2—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠6 ♠AK8 ♠AQ8942

The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
3 ♠ Pass Pass ?

What action do you take?

A.—The preempt has achieved its purpose—every bid you might consider is flawed. Three no trump is unthinkable without a spade stopper; four clubs is a drastic underbid and five clubs could land you in an unplayable spot with several better options. All you can do is double, despite the fact that you would like at least one more heart. That's primarily for takeout, and leaves more options open than anything else.

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠852 ♠AJ5 ♠AEJ83 ♠72

The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass ?

What do you bid now?

A.—Regardless of whether you play two-over-one responses are game-forcing or not, the right bid is four spades. In the former event, you want to tell partner you are not

interested in more than game. If two diamonds was not a game force, you can't afford to have partner pass three spades, which would be invitational.

Q.4—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AQ765 ♠Q102 ♠83 ♠952

The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass ?

What do you bid now?

A.—Facing a demand bid, you have a very good hand, and raising to four hearts would not do it justice. Jump to five hearts. That tells partner you have a good hand with excellent trump support, but nothing new to cue-bid.

Q.5—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠Q7642 ♠A ♠A965 ♠A98

The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass ?

What do you bid now?

A.—Any hand with three aces is, in our opinion, full value for an opening bid, and this one's too good to simply raise to three clubs. Bid two diamonds, then show your club support at your next turn.

Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠KJ109 ♠3 ♠A1076 ♠K986

The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ 1 ♠ 1 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—There's no rush to get into this auction. East's one spade is forcing on West, so you can afford to await developments. Pass. By the time the bidding gets back to you, the opponents might be high enough for you to double.



Chinese decathlete Cai Min releases the discus during the track and field events at the East Asian Games. After seven disciplines Cai was in first place overall (AFP photo).

China dominates East Asian Games

SHANGHAI (AP) — Host China added 13 golds to its medal count Friday at the inaugural East Asian Games, dominating track and field for the second straight day by capturing gold in seven of nine events.

Chinese also were strong in swimming, winning four of the six golds.

At the midpoint of the 10-day games, China had won 49 of the 103 golds awarded. It also earned 40 silvers and 18 bronzes. Japan was in second place with 15 golds, 18 silvers and 33 bronzes, followed by South Korea with 12 golds, 12 silvers and 18 bronzes.

Mongolia got its first medals Friday, three bronzes in judo. Macao and Guam have failed to win any medals. The other participants are North Korea, Taipei and Hong Kong.

In weightlifting, South Korea

captured the gold in the 108-kilogramme event, while China won the over-108-kilogramme event.

In judo, South Koreans won the men's competition. China captured the over-72-kilogramme title while South Korea took the gold in the 72-kilogramme event.

In martial arts, Japan captured the gold in men's taijiquan, while the women's changquan title went to China.

In basketball preliminaries Friday, China's women beat Japan 106-76, and South Korea topped Taipei 88-65. In the men's competition, China defeated Taipei 79-63. South Korea trounced Macao 119-55, and North Korea beat Japan 86-67.

In soccer preliminaries, South Korea routed Mongolia 10-0. Japan thrashed Macao 19-0 and China and North Korea tied 1-1.

Hornets edge Knicks in double-overtime

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (R) — Muggsy Bogues, the shortest man in the NBA, came up big Friday to lead the Charlotte Hornets to a double overtime win that kept the New York Knicks from taking command in their Eastern Conference semifinal series. Bogues, who stands 5-foot-3 (1.60 m), hit a jumper with 53.8 seconds remaining and added a pair of free throws with 5.5 seconds left in the second overtime for Charlotte's last four points in a 110-106 victory over the Knicks, who had swept the first two games of the best-of-seven series. Alonzo Mourning led the Hornets with 34 points and Larry Johnson had 31 for Charlotte, including 20 in the first half.

AFC/Oceania officials to meet FIFA on 1988 plan

TOKYO (R) — A joint team from the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) and Oceania will have talks with FIFA officials in Zurich next month about their plans for the 1998 World Cup qualifying rounds. AFC General Secretary Peter Velappan Saturday said: "We will be making a formal request to FIFA's executive committee for a third place in the 1998 World Cup finals in France. We think our request for an extra place is a fair one as our membership is due to be boosted by the addition of Asian nations from the former Soviet Union."

Ferguson and Giggs add to United awards

LONDON (AP) — English Premier League champions Manchester United have picked up two more awards in the Manager of the Year and Young Eagle of the Year. Alex Ferguson becomes the first boss to land Premier titles in England and Scotland, while Welsh winger Ryan Giggs collects the players' prize. Each won 5,000 pounds. Giggs' nomination from a seven-man panel including England boss Graham Taylor, Wales' manager Terry Yorath and Eire chief Jack Charlton completed a notable double for the 19-year-old, who won the Professional

Footballers' Association trophy earlier this year. The divisional managerial trophies went to the bosses of the champion clubs: Kevin Keegan of Newcastle, Stoke's Lou Macari and Eddie May of Cardiff.

Kenya's Ngugi pledges forceful return

NAIROBI (R) — Five-times World Cross Country champion John Ngugi, whose indefinite ban for refusing a dope test was lifted by Kenyan athletics chiefs this week, said Friday he felt vindicated and pledged to prove he was a clean track star. "I tell everyone I am back and ready, we shall meet on the track. I have been gravely offended and I want to prove my point by a sweep of everything in sight," Ngugi told Reuters in his first interview with reporters since his February ban. "I badly wanted to win a sixth World Cross Country title then quit that category honourably. This dope test business messed that up, so now I must fulfil my dream," Ngugi said.

Everton not for sale

LIVERPOOL (AP) — Debt-ridden English Premier League giants Everton have denied that they are for sale at around five million pounds. Chairman David Walsh has rejected suggestions principle shareholder Sir John Moores wants to offload his controlling interest in the Merseyside Club, who are believed to be four million pounds in the red. Marsh said: "The major shareholder in Everton Football Club has no intention of selling his shareholding. A report suggesting otherwise was of a highly speculative nature."

Alesi to extend contract with Ferrari

MILAN (AP) — Jean Alesi said Friday that he will sign, within days, a two-year extension of his contract with Italian Formula One team Ferrari. The Frenchman, in Milan for a sports telecast, said a general agreement already has been reached with Ferrari officials. "The signing of the new contract is set within a few days," said Alesi, whose contract with Ferrari was due to expire at the end of this year. He did not elaborate on terms. Alesi also praised the Italian team decision to sign Jean Todt as general manager. Todt, a Frenchman who directed Peugeot's sports division, will join Ferrari July 1.

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Yeltsin opponent seeks compromise over constitution

MOSCOW (AP) — Boris Yeltsin's chief rival Saturday urged a compromise over competing proposed constitutions, apparently signalling his readiness to end Russia's lingering political crisis.

Parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov, Yeltsin's most prominent critic, said he hoped "the best elements" could be drawn from two proposed new charters and that a compromise version could be approved by the fall.

Mr. Khasbulatov, meeting with Western reporters, rejected accusations that he was a hard-liner bent on using the congress of peoples deputies to block reform.

"The paradox is that there is no deadlock, either in the parliament or in the country," Mr. Khasbulatov told members of Moscow's Foreign Correspondents Association. He said he was ready to relinquish his role as speaker, and that the proposed constitution he prefers would eliminate the congress.

"There is no congress in it," he said. The constitution proposed by Mr. Yeltsin also would eliminate the congress in favour of a bicameral legislature, a proposal opposed by most of the 1,042 lawmakers.

Although Mr. Khasbulatov signalled that he was seeking a compromise, he warned of the "danger" of Mr. Yeltsin's plan to call a convention on June 5-10 to draft a new constitution that would strengthen the presidency.

"It would seem to me to be very dangerous to be drawn into any kind of unconstitutional structures that would approve a constitution," said Mr. Khasbulatov.

Iran claims 6 rebels killed in border raid

NICOSIA (AP) — Iranian Revolutionary Guards killed six rebels infiltrating from Iraq last Thursday, the guards corps claimed Saturday in a rare admission that rebels are active inside Iran amid mounting border tension.

If the report of cross-border raids from Iraq is correct — and the main rebel group has admitted losing six fighters in a raid Thursday — it could signal a sharp deterioration in Baghdad's uneasy relations with Tehran and possible Iranian retaliation.

The official Islamic Republic News Agency, monitored in Cyprus, quoted a brief guards corps statement saying the rebels were slain in an ambush near Dehloran in the western Ilam province bordering Iraq.

The statement gave no other details. But the Mujahadeen-e-Khalq, said the six activists lost Thursday were killed in a major firefight with Revolutionary Guards near the Meymech River northwest of Dehloran.

The Iraq-based Mujahadeen, the main Iranian opposition movement, claimed its fighters killed or wounded "scores of guards" in that clash.

It was one of 14 operations the Mujahadeen claimed it carried out inside Iran May 2-13 in which 200 Revolutionary Guards were reported killed or wounded for the loss of seven rebels and eight oil pipelines blown up in southwestern Iran. It claimed 11 operations in April.

The IRNA report made no mention of any government casualties in Thursday's Dehloran gunbattle. Nor did it mention any other clashes with the Mujahadeen.

But the IRNA report was the first official confirmation by the Tehran regime of the Mujahadeen claims and indicated that other clashes may have taken

place.

Mujahadeen spokesman Shahn Ghobadi told the Associated Press in Nicosia by telephone Friday that none of the rebel operations this month involved cross-border infiltration. He said all had been carried out by Iran-based rebel forces.

But the major clashes cited by the Mujahadeen took place in western Iran close to the frontier.

Senior Mujahadeen officials said the operations inside Iran marked an escalation in their campaign to topple the Tehran regime. They are seeking to exploit growing discontent caused by severe economic problems and rifts within the ruling hierarchy.

After the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war ended, Iraq is understood to have halted all cross-border operations by the Mujahadeen and its military wing, the National Liberation Army of Iran.

Until now, Iraq is believed to have kept them on a tight leash to avoid antagonising Iran at a time when it needs it as a trading link to the west.

It is highly unlikely that the Mujahadeen and the NLA would mount cross-border operations without Iraq's approval.

Tension along the border has been building for months. Baghdad has repeatedly said that Iran was sending saboteurs and agents into Iraq, including Revolutionary Guard units to support Shiite Muslim rebels in the southern marshes.

It is possible that Iraq has let the Mujahadeen off the leash to carry out low-level retaliation.

In February, the Iraqi Foreign Ministry warned of possible retaliation "at the proper time with the proper means" if the Iranian operations were not halted.

Tehran has denied the allegations, accusing Iraq of allowing "counter-revolutionaries" to attack Iran.



UP YOU GO: One of Vienna's famous Lipizzaner horses performs in front of Vienna's townhall (AP photo)

Arms collection starts today

By Saad Silawi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government does not intend to conduct a house-to-house search for unlicensed weapons owned by citizens, but it intends to implement a law on collecting unlicensed firearms as provided for by a decision issued by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, giving a two-month period for collecting arms, according to Interior Minister Jawdat Al Shoul.

Mr. Shoul emphasised that the government would not extend this period for collecting arms and urged citizens possessing unlicensed arms to hand them to the People's Army command units or police stations spread all over the Kingdom as soon as possible starting today (Sunday).

He said all citizens delivering their unlicensed weapons will be issued a receipt from the collection centres and they will be entitled to a compensation which will be paid to them later.

Ad hoc committees will evaluate the value of arms, taking into consideration their quality, fitness and model, he said.

In case security forces find any unlicensed weapon with

any citizen or resident in Jordan after the expiry of the collection period, he/she will be liable for prosecution, the minister said.

Those owning licensed arms, he added, are entitled to keep them at their homes or in their care while travelling.

According to lawyers, possession of automatic arms without licence is punishable by law and can lead to three years imprisonment with hard labour. They say the maximum penalty for the possession of unlicensed pistols and hunting rifles is imprisonment for six months.

At the same time, they maintain, law does not allow any security personnel to search houses or stores unless armed with written order issued by the attorney general.

The campaign to collect arms was scheduled to start last January, but was deferred by the government pending Parliament approval, which was secured March 17.

A majority of deputies passed the order following a recommendation by the Lower House's Administrative Committee stating that the government had legal grounds for issuing regulations on the possession of arms in the Kingdom, despite opposition by

committee chairman Daoud Kojak, a Muslim Brotherhood deputy.

Lower House member Fares Al Nabulsi told the Jordan Times that the government should license all firearms owned by citizens or should pay for the weapons directly when they hand them.

It will be "unjust to confiscate people's properties" without compensation, he said.

Some maintain that during the Gulf crisis the government of former Prime Minister Mudar Badran, under pressure by deputies to arm the people, announced that it was financially incapable of doing that, while at the same time it did not question people who bought weapons in preparation for any spread in the Gulf war.

People feared at the time that Jordan would be involved in a war with Israel had Israel responded to missile attacks by Iraq.

Mr. Shoul said that since this did not happen, the current government is now obliged to collect weapons so as not to allow any rise in crime rates, while some believe that the measure was taken by the government out of fear of violence erupting during parliamentary election campaigns later this year.

Palestinians expect moves towards unity

(Continued from page 1)

described as a "point-by-point copy of the Israeli plan," also added to the PLO's disappointment. The American proposal, of which a copy was distributed to the press by Mr. Hawatmeh yesterday, was a draft for an "Israeli-Palestinian joint statement," and was rejected by Tunis.

Moreover, Mr. Arafat's expectations that Palestinian acceptance to return to the ninth round would "translate U.S. and Israeli promises into action" and that Saudi Arabia would pour badly-needed funds into the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and Palestinian in-

stitutions were not fulfilled.

"What I had expected happened," Mr. Hawatmeh said, referring to his previous warnings against Palestinian participation in the last round.

"The delegation has been running in circles for the last 18 months, and it is time to change this approach," he told the press conference.

U.S. draft links self-rule and final status

(Continued from page 1)

terim self-government, and (humanitarian affairs and) human rights. The two sides have engaged in substantive discussion and have narrowed some of the differences between them, although there are many issues (discussed in the Israeli-Palestinian track and in the Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian plenary) that have not been included in this statement and that remain to be resolved.

The omission of these issues in this statement is without prejudice to the position of the two sides.

The two sides have agreed that the occupied territories are viewed as a single territorial unit. They agree that issues related to the question of sovereignty will be negotiated during talks on permanent status and that negotiations on land issues during the interim

period will preserve (take place without prejudice to) territorial integrity; that is the territory will be treated as a whole even while they negotiate the difficult issues of land.

(Alternatively) they have difficult views on jurisdiction, land and water, which they will continue to discuss.

This joint statement represents an important first step towards reaching agreement on interim arrangements. The two sides will direct their efforts to bridging remaining substantive differences. They have submitted themselves to work toward creating a positive climate for those negotiations. They agree that there is no acceptable alternative to making those negotiations succeed, and it is the only realistic pathway to achieving a just and enduring peace.

Pro-Saudi Muslim leader elected Yemeni speaker

SANAA (AP) — Yemen's new parliament Saturday elected a pro-Saudi Arabian Muslim fundamentalist leader as its speaker, a development that was expected to speed up reconciliation with the wealthy northern neighbour and placate opposition at home.

Sheikh Abdullah Ben Hussein Al Ahmar, leader of Al Islah Party, was installed for a four-year term by 223 votes against 59 for his independent rival, Mohammad Ali Rabadi, the state-run radio said.

Some members of the 301-seat house did not attend or abstained, the figures indicated.

The closed-door session was parliament's first since its election April 27 in the first democratic experiment in the Arabian peninsula, which is dominated by monarchies or one-party rule.

After his election, Mr. Ahmar urged parliament to work for "a better future in which our nation will enjoy security, stability, prosperity and progress."

He said present conditions in Yemen necessitated "objective and serious" efforts that place the interests of the country as a whole above those of individuals or parties.

"Parliament represents the entire nation and does not represent a party or region," he said. "The most important task is to work for establishing proper democracy in this parliament."

Yemen, a Red Sea country of 14.5 million people, is one of the poorest in the Arab world.

Its economic hardships have been aggravated since the Gulf war. Widespread pro-Iraq sym-

pathy angered Saudi Arabia, Yemen's main bankroller, which severed the cash flow and revoked work contracts of some one million Yemenis.

Also, political turmoil has gripped the country since the merger of conservative North Yemen with the formerly Marxist South Yemen in 1990.

Some 40 political groupings have emerged in this largely tribal country to challenge the General People's Congress and the Yemeni Socialist Party, which governed the North and South respectively and later formed a coalition to run unified Yemen.

Mr. Ahmar's group has emerged as a key contestant after winning 63 seats in parliament, second only to the General People's Congress of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, which won 122.

Mr. Ahmar, 58, also leads one of the strongest tribes in Yemen, the Hashidi. He is close to Saudi Arabia, which reportedly viewed the elections last month as a potential harbinger of democratic change in the region.

The high-profile he now enjoys is expected to help alleviate the Saudi fears. He also is now better placed to control fundamentalists, whose quest for social reforms on religious grounds has also led to friction, especially in what was formerly a Marxist society in the south.

Parliament's next task is to decide whether the coalition government would remain in office or be replaced by a five-member presidential council which, in turn, will elect a head of state from among its members.

Kuwait close to issuing arms offset guidelines

ABU DHABI (R) — Kuwait will soon require arms suppliers to reinvest 30 per cent of the billions of dollars the emirate spends on weapons, industry sources said Saturday.

Once the arms reinvestment programme is in place, Kuwait also intends to become the first regional state to demand reinvestment for lucrative civilian contracts to rebuild the country following the 1991 Gulf war, the sources added.

"They will then look to offset projects like rebuilding an airport or road works," one expert said.

He said Kuwait was studying a fifth and possibly final draft of guidelines for an offset programme. It was modified following talks with arms manufacturers and regional states which have similar programmes.

Kuwait has military hardware worth more than \$4.5 billion on order from the United States and has a defence procurement plan worth \$12 billion over the next decade. Kuwait's 1993 expenditure is put by some experts as high as \$6 billion.

Saudi Arabia, the region's largest arms purchaser, requires a 25 to 30 per cent reinvestment in the kingdom while the United Arab Emirates (UAE) demands 60 per cent.

"The Kuwait programme is quite ambitious and demands a 30 per cent true offset of the total value of a deal," one expert said.

In Saudi Arabia and the UAE, arms producers only offset their earnings before interest and tax, multiplied by an undisclosed coefficient, experts say.

France's state-owned Giat industries is expected to reinvest about \$500 million in the UAE which in February ordered 390 Leclerc battle tanks and 46 recovery tanks in a deal worth about \$3.5 billion.

The sources said that Kuwait's offset programme would be de-

signed to meet a criticism elsewhere in the Gulf that some arms companies find it difficult to identify projects in which to invest earnings from arms sales.

"They (Kuwait) will allow arms producers to offset the value of Kuwait deals worth more than five million dollars (\$17 million) overseas with Kuwaiti partners," one expert said.

He said Kuwait had recently signed a contract with Hughes Aircraft Company to offset its purchase of \$100 million worth of hardware from the American firm. Kuwait had earlier bought an early warning radar system from Hughes.

Kuwait also has 40 F/A-18 dual-role Hornets on order from the U.S. Patriot anti-missile missile launchers and more than 200 of the missiles and 256 General Dynamics M-1A2 Abrams tanks.

New deals, which could now require offset projects, are expected to include a 10-year supply of armoured warrior and Piranha vehicles, made by Britain's GKN Sankey, warships, ammunition, air defence systems and other hardware, experts say.

The offset programme will be controlled by the Kuwaiti Finance Ministry which controls the country's scandal-racked foreign investments operated by the Kuwait Investment Office (KIO) and Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA).

The offset projects will enable the KIO to regain some of the losses incurred by the Gulf war and sanctions," said an expert.

The KIO, one of the world's largest investors before the war, controlled more than \$100 billion but has made substantial losses on some of its investment and was forced to liquidate others to finance the 28-nation U.S.-led military alliance which drove Iraqi troops out of the emirate in 1991.

S. Arabia detains activist

(Continued from page 1)

was adequately provided with institutions to handle the people's grievances and did not need such a group.

A U.S. State Department report in January spoke of "pervasive abuse" of human rights in Saudi Arabia, citing among others "torture and other abuse of prisoners... prohibitions or severe restriction on the freedom of speech and press."

The prince dismissed as untrue charges that Saudi Arabia held political prisoners.

"All that is said or heard... about what they call political prisoners... we do not have this issue."

The kingdom's highest religious authority Wednesday condemned the human rights group as illegal and said that the country

pledged almost \$20 million in aid.

But Israeli politicians acknowledge that there is little interest in substantial investment at the moment.

"Without peace nobody wants to touch it," said Ephraim Sneh, chairman of the parliament sub-committee on the occupied territories.

The problems are making many workers even more disenchanted with the peace process.

"Freedom without work is not freedom," said Hassan Mahmoud Awad, a 36-year-old tile layer.

Not everyone agrees. On the wall outside Mr. Maghraby's stuffed animal factory, the group Hamas scrawled graffiti reading: "Yes for starvation. No for submission."

talks, said Arab foreign ministers meeting soon in Amman would decide on whether and when to resume negotiations.

But he added that the Palestinians were "willing to stay in Washington day in and day out once we feel there is a minimum agreement that requires the hard task of textual treatment and drafting. We don't feel that we are yet in that position."

The PLO official said it may be possible to stay in negotiations following the next round of talks if there is agreement with the Israelis on the statement of principles.

"We want the peace process to succeed," Dr. Shaath said.

A Syrian government newspaper said Saturday that the United States had failed to play the role of "full partner" in the latest round of peace talks.

COLUMN 8

Paramedics race to police station on a mission of money

CHICAGO (AP) — With sirens wailing and lights flashing, two paramedics raced their ambulance to a police station. It was a mission of money, not medicine.

The two came across a knot of 12 to 15 cars along the shoulder of Interstate 55. It was chaos. Thousands of dollars had fallen out the back doors of an armoured truck and motorists were scooping it up. "People were sticking money in their pockets, any pockets that they had. I saw a motorcyclist sticking it in his helmet," said paramedic Brandon Hatch. Mr. Hatch and his partner, John Wodzick, were worried the money was from a drug deal, so Mr. Hatch grabbed a bagful and they sped to a police station. "If it was illegal money we didn't want to stick around and find out," Mr. Wodzick said.

The bag they recovered was filled with \$120,000 — in 10 dollar bills. Five more bags of cash were missing by the time a motorist stopped the truck in Indiana about 32 kilometres away to tell the driver his doors were open, said Chicago Police Capt. John Minogoe. At least \$400,000 tumbled from the truck owned by Loomis Armored Inc. in Indianapolis, said company spokesman Dennis Fisher. Others joined the paramedics in returning money for a total of \$150,000 recovered, he said. Mr. Fisher wouldn't be more specific on the amount of cash that fell out.

Disgruntled magician's wife brails his bunny

RYDE, England (R) — A magician's wife, irritated at his frequent absences abroad, cooked and served him his long-time associate and stage prop — his rabbit. Chris Cox said Friday that his 29-year-old wife and former assistant Christine had killed Roger the rabbit and served him for dinner at their home in Ryde, southern England. The Times newspaper reported that Mrs. Cox said she killed the rabbit accidentally when she kicked over a pile of her husband's stage props in a fit of rage at his absence. An accomplished cook, she skinned and cooked the rabbit in a marinade of prunes, stewed tea, bacon dripping and red wine. "Christine's a good cook and is always making unusual dishes," Mr. Cox was quoted as saying in the Times.

"She asked me to guess what it was and I said I thought it might be chicken. Eventually she told me and I just couldn't finish it. I nearly threw up... It's causing a fair amount of tension between us," Mr. Cox, 48, said.

Robber arrested after reporting getaway car stolen

ATHENS (AP) — Police arrested one of Greece's most wanted bank robbers after he tried to report that his getaway car had been stolen. Athens newspapers reported that 29-year-old Pavlos Bassios, known as the "Don Juan thief," was arrested at a police station after officers realised that the expensive sports car he was describing had been used in at least two robberies. Mr. Bassios confessed to being the robber after his arrest and provided police with full details on his bank heists. He said he wanted to report the theft because the car was registered in his name and he feared police would question him if it was involved in an accident. Mr. Bassios added that it was a "tragic irony" that police identified the car. His rakish good looks and polite demeanor made him a media celebrity during his one-year career as a bank robber. He stole 48 million drachmas (\$220,000) in five armed robberies but was never identified. Greek banks are not equipped with cameras.

Thief steals car — and baby inside

SCHAUMBURG, Illinois (R) — A two-year-old girl was dropped off unharmed at a suburban Chicago store Friday, apparently by a thief who did not see her asleep in the back seat when he stole her father's Volkswagen Beetle, police said. Police converged on the shopping centre after receiving a call from an unknown man speaking in a low voice. They found Rachel Jagla unharmed, 12 hours after she was abducted, and with her diapers changed. Her father, Robert, had left the Beetle in his vintage 1971 cream-coloured Beetle early Friday morning while picking up his wife from her job at a suburban hotel. When Jagla returned a minute later, the car was gone, along with his daughter.

Siege stalls plans for improving Palestinian economy

By Neil MacFarquhar
The Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Occupied Gaza Strip — The Gaza Strip, with its constant violence between Israelis and Palestinians, might seem an unlikely spot for a teddy bear factory.

But six months ago, toy store owner Ahmad Al Maghraby put \$40,000 in savings and a European Community (EC)-backed loan into manufacturing stuffed animals.

At the time, there was increased confidence that the peace talks in Washington were moving toward some form of Palestinian autonomy.

Both Israeli and Palestinian business leaders talked about the need to boost economic activity in the West Bank and Gaza.

Then came March, and the violent deaths of 15 Israelis at the hands of Palestinians. The government responded by shutting off the West Bank and Gaza Strip at the end of the month.

The closure, which military officials have said will last a long time, is wreaking havoc with plans to create a sturdy economy.

As a dry run for autonomy, it also underscored how mutually dependent Israelis and Palestinians have become.

Israeli developers and farmers with labour-intensive harvests counted their losses in the millions. Economists estimate that the \$700 million in Israeli goods purchased by Palestinians will drop by up to one half.

The sudden collapse of the

labour market caused an outcry of demands for Russian immigrants, Asian labourers — anybody to take the place of the generally low paid Palestinian workers.

Gradually the government relented, allowing married Palestinian fathers over the age of 25 to obtain work permits. The 20,000 a day allowed in now is expected to rise eventually to around 50,000.

That is much reduced from the 120,000 wage earners who used to enter daily. In Gaza, an unemployment rate of 40 per cent even before the closure is blamed for fuelling the constant violence. Now, an estimated 80 per cent of the workforce among the 800,000 Palestinians is out of work.

Palestinian economist Samir Haleilah estimates the losses in

the occupied territories at \$4 million per day.

But more important, the closure is destroying confidence that investments in the occupied territories can pay off.

"The peace process is having problems and the economic climate is not welcoming anymore. That's why the closure is so serious," said Mr. Haleilah.

A United Nations report released this week points to an already disastrous economic situation in the occupied territories in the wake of the Gulf war.

The military government that runs the occupied territories has recognised the problem, earmarking about 200 million shekels in development money to create jobs. Eventually it hopes to create between 15,000 and 20,000. Western nations have also

pledged almost \$20 million in aid.

But Israeli politicians acknowledge that there is little interest in substantial investment at the moment.

"Without peace nobody wants to touch it," said Ephraim Sneh, chairman of the parliament sub-committee on the occupied territories.

The problems are making many workers even more disenchanted with the peace process.

"Freedom without work is not freedom," said Hassan Mahmoud Awad, a 36-year-old tile layer.

Not everyone agrees. On the wall outside Mr. Maghraby's stuffed animal factory, the group Hamas scrawled graffiti reading: "Yes for starvation. No for submission."